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THE FORUM AND · CENTURY

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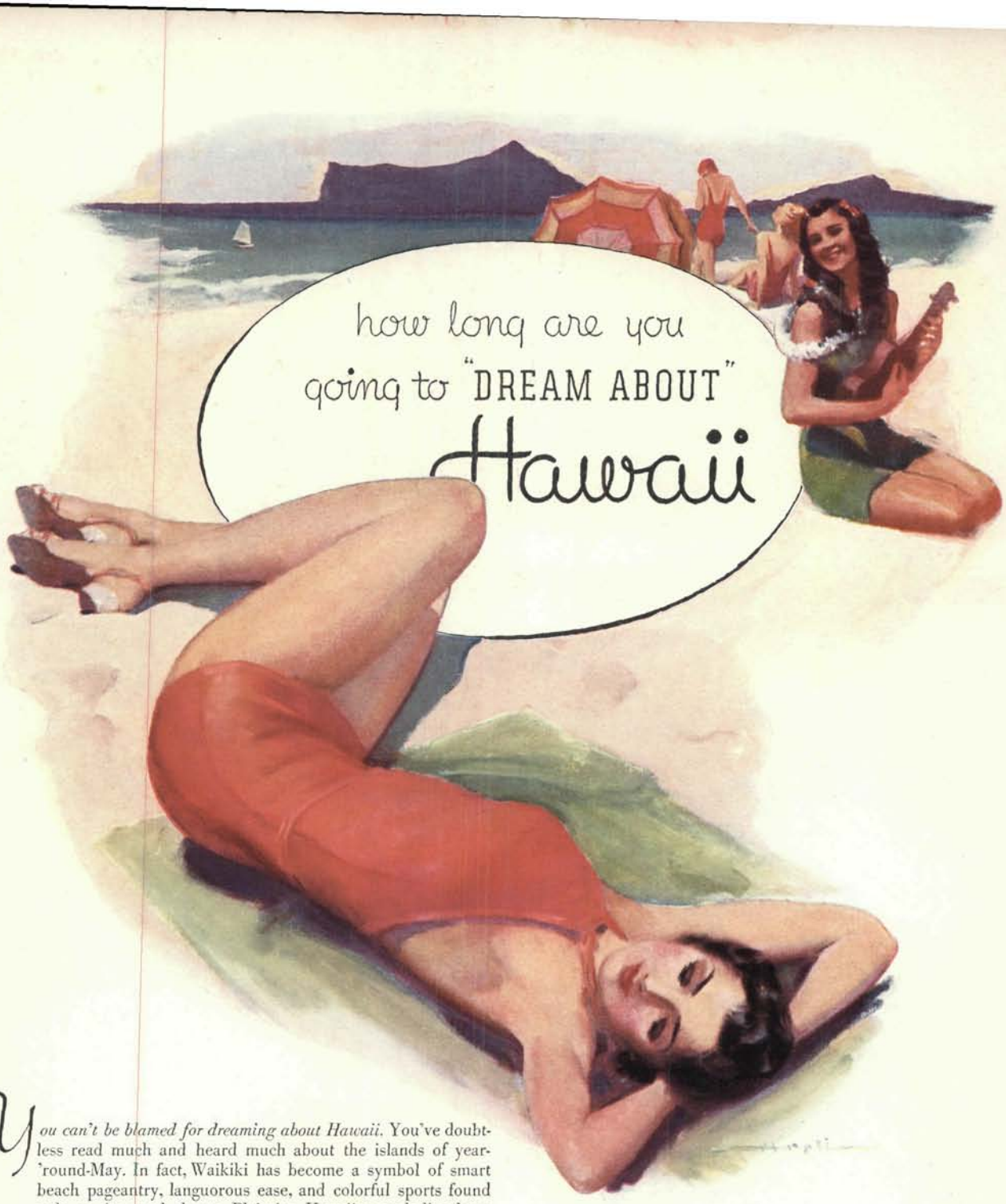

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THE
FORUM
AND · CENTURY

SEPTEMBER, 1934 VOL. 92, NO. 3

FROM PILLOWCASES TO SHIRTS

Editorial Foreword

TOLERANCE is an enlightened attitude of mind which can listen to contrary-minded opinions without anger and, though it may seek to resist them, does not desire to throttle them. Intolerance is produced by any one of a number of clouded states of mind, of which five are outstanding — fear, fanaticism, laziness, ignorance, and selfishness.

Fear and its child, jealousy, playing upon ignorance, are behind the main prejudices which get written into our history textbooks and pollute the minds of our children. If we had always been cleverer than the British in the Revolution and there had been no Bunker Hill and occupation of New York and Philadelphia and no help from Lafayette and no burning of the National Capital in the War of 1812, we would have been taught to believe that the redcoats were brave fellows. We might even have conceded to the British an occasional gleam of a sense of humor. And, if the Confederate generals had been a little stupid in the Civil War and blundered occasionally, our history books would have forgiven the South a little sooner.

RAINBOW SHIRTS

MASS PREJUDICE in America comes to a head periodically and crystallizes in various forms and with new insignia. Ten years ago the popular symbols of intolerance were the pillowcase and the burning cross. This year the badge of intolerance is the colored shirt. New "shirt" organizations are springing up every month, groups claiming their hundreds of thousands of members, training at night in barns and vacant lots, and banded together in the name of a better and purer America. We have the Brown Shirts with their headquarters in New York, the Silver Shirts emanating from North Carolina, the White Shirts of Tennessee, the White Legion of Alabama, the Gray Shirts of Glens Falls, and the Khaki Shirts of Pennsylvania. To these actual wearers of fraternal shirts, Mr. Travis Hoke in his useful pamphlet adds a new peril, the as-yet-unorganized Dress Shirts (*Shirts*, American Civil Liberties Union, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York City, June, 1934, 15 cents).

As long as the various Rainbow Shirts who represent the angry prejudices of the herd do not find superior intellectual leadership, the nation is safe. It is when the Boiled Shirt fraternizes with the Rainbow Shirt, when an intellectual assumes direction of the frustrated masses, that madness overtakes a nation. We now see how a sad fury has mastered another civilized nation, Germany, in the coalescence of brain workers and blind prejudice under the leadership of Hitler.

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I have always maintained that America grows more tolerant from decade to decade. We have come a long way from the time when we officially hanged Quakers on Boston Common. The statistics of lynching show a steady decrease. There is this gain about the organized intolerance of 1934, that it shows its face openly. The most festering prejudices are those which are whispered under cover of darkness. Ten years ago the Ku Klux Klan came marching in white nightshirts in the dark, heads hidden under pillowcases. The shirt organizations of 1934, I am told, appear valiantly in daylight and do not even wear masks over their faces. This is distinct progress. Also their animus is less general. The fury of the Klan was concentrated against Roman Catholics, but there was plenty left over for the Negro and the Jew. Now the Shirts of 1934 seem to be fairly tolerant of the Pope and the color line; they merely tremble for the Jew suspected of being hidden in every economic and political woodpile. They allege that Jewish blood can be traced in the Dutch ancestry of President Roosevelt.

Pillowcases

Fortunately, the Klan lacked distinguished leadership. No great poet, however Nordic his yearnings, was quite willing to idealize their inchoate frustrations. No silver-tongued statesman could be persuaded to become their oracle. The dangerous union of intellectual snobbery and passionate patrioteering did not come off. The Klan reached its apogee in the leadership of an able dentist from Texas; its most philosophical document was the article published in The Forum, in December, 1925, by Dr. Hiram Wesley Evans, Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan — "The Klan: Defender of Americanism." The Imperial Wizard consented to be drawn for The Forum, dressed in Klan robes but with his smiling face unveiled and the characteristic pillowcase thrown back from his forehead. This was probably a strategic error. At any rate, the Klan waned. By night crosses ceased burning on our hillsides, and pillowcased armies no longer marched through our village streets. The Imperial Wizard went for advice to that sturdy statesman, the late Senator Beveridge, who was writing his life of Lincoln. Dr. Evans asked the senator whether the Klan had better do away with its pillowcases and come out into the open in defense of a pure religion and a pure race. "No," said Beveridge. "If you take off your pillowcases, you have nothing left."

The Woodpile

And now the Silver Shirts, "The Christian Militia," are among us, preaching a Holy Crusade. They do not hide their faces but they exorcise a new mysticism by appealing to astrology; each recruit is required to state in his application blank not only the hour but the minute of his birth. And the mysterious whisperings begin again. We shake our heads in fear of the distant Japs. We shiver because the Jews are debasing the currency and because the Brain Trust is in the pay of Moscow.

Ignorance and jealousy are at the bottom of most intolerance of Irish Catholics. It is not because of their bad urban politics that they are distrusted. Racially they are distrusted because of their superior imagination, their gaiety, their charm. Religiously they are mistrusted because of the poetic beauty of their ceremonies on the one hand and on the other the austerities and self-discipline that so often they practice on their self-sacrificing lives.

And the Jews among us who are now incurring the hatred of the Shirts are distrusted more for their wisdom and their integrity than for their usury. In New York State just now two Jews are performing miracles of public service. Governor Lehman is conducting the affairs of the state with a combination of business competence and the high ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. Park Commissioner Moses is carving out of backyards and refuse dumps public parks and parkways as beautiful as the baths and gardens of ancient Rome. In the Federal Government we have a citizen of Jewish birth who through his tireless efficiency and unflinching integrity has risen to the post of Secretary of the Treasury. History may or may not judge Henry Morgenthau, Jr., a great Secretary of the Treasury, but, regardless of history's pronouncement, I would sooner trust my American bonds around the corner in his keeping than in the hands of some of his distinguished Nordic predecessors.

Henry Goddard Leach

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WHAT RELIGION MEANS TO ME

BY MARY BORDEN

Born, baptized, and brought up a Christian, in a nursery pervaded by medieval magic, lovely and awful; questioning no single tenet of the fundamentalists, not even the scaly reality of the serpent who talked to Eve in the Garden of Eden and tempted her with a magic apple in appearance precisely like those on the dining-room table; shaken out of this vague acquiescence in ancient legend at the age of twelve by the thunderous preaching of a hollow-cheeked follower of Moody and Sankey and brought literally to my knees in a revival meeting where I confessed my sins before the whole congregation; after this, from twelve to seventeen, seriously disturbed by my own sinful nature, not a little oppressed by visions of eternal punishment, but rebellious and in my innermost heart unconvinced that my soul was desperately wicked above all things or that I had grieved Jesus Christ by going to a dance and curling my hair; yet, when I did these things, mightily distressed by a guilty conscience and driven at last in confused desperation to vow I would give up the gay, frivolous, delicious world and go as a foreign missionary to the heathen of China; suddenly a year later I threw it all over and declared that I had no more use for Christianity.

The crisis was precipitated by an aged and dignified theologian of the Calvinist school, an old man with a thatch of white hair capping a square, red face. He was a friend of my mother's. He came to see us for the express purpose, I believe now — though I didn't know it then — of saving my soul from perdition, and I found myself with him alone in the library behind closed doors.

It was a long time ago, and I've forgotten everything that he said to me that day except one thing, his answer to the question I put him. But I remember quite distinctly what led up to it. I remember thinking, "I'm cornered; I'm up against it; all right, let's have it out. This old man is an authority; what he says is what orthodox Christians believe. I've got to face it sometime; it might as well be now." So I said to him, and I seem to remember speaking the words with great emphasis: "Tell me, do you really actually believe that the three hundred odd million people living in India and the three hundred million more living in China who've never heard of Jesus Christ are going to burn in hell forever because they don't accept Him as their Saviour?" The old Presbyterian doctor of divinity looked at me out of his grim eyes and said: "Yes, I believe this." "Very well," I said, "then I'm through. I'm not going to have anything more to do with Christianity; I've no use for it."

A peculiarly unfortunate experience, a peculiarly crude and outrageous type of Christian minister, this old man who drove me out of the Church? I'm not so sure. I think he was only a little more honest than a thousand others who profess much the same beliefs. And my revolt was by no means all his doing. The grotesque dialogue I've recounted would have had no lasting consequence had it not been led up to by a hundred sermons that were leveled at my palpitating solar plexus, by years of Bible teaching that never attempted to place Jesus of Nazareth before me as a man of history, by endless talks about the fact that He had died to atone for my sins, with men who believed they were led to save my soul yet failed to convey to me any sense of His reality. I must put it brutally. I was bored by it all. For as long as my childish acquiescence lasted, I did not know how bored I was. But the moment came when the repetition of phrases that meant nothing to me failed to hold any magic, and I turned away from it all, with zest and a sense of immense relief, to investigate facts. I started out on my own in search of truth and reality,

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not the truth of the life hereafter but the truth of this present life that was mine now, not the reality of God the Father in Heaven but the reality of human beings on earth. Nor did it occur to me to think of Jesus Christ as one of the human beings who had been up against the same problems that faced me and had solved them.

II

I do not believe that my experience was unique or that I am peculiar within my generation in being bored by the Christian religion as taught in the churches. If I am peculiar it is in this, that, having thrown over Christianity completely and having failed to suffer in any noticeable way as a result, I am now once more passionately interested in the Founder of the faith I discarded. But did He found it? Was all this what He meant? Was He a Roman Catholic, a Calvinist, a Wesleyan-Methodist, a Quaker? It came to me one night camping by the Sea of Galilee that He had been born a Jew, had been crucified because He dared to tell His nation the truth, and that I knew almost nothing about Him.

His personality had, it seemed, haunted me all these years. Some of His words had echoed all this time in my mind. I opened the book where His sayings were recorded and began to read, after an interval of nearly twenty years, and became absorbed in the effort to find out what He had meant by what He had said. I found then that quite enigmatic words started out at me from those pages. The word "Messiah" was one. What did it mean when He used it, what did it mean to Him and to the people who sat at His feet in a village in Galilee in the time of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea; and why was it that He refused to allow His followers to call Him "Messiah," until He had made up His mind to die?

I did not want to discuss these questions with theologians. I am reluctant to do so now, for it has been borne in on me that religion is a private thing, a personal thing, and that I cannot bear to discuss or profess in public what it means to me.

I could not and cannot find what I want in the Church nor can I find it in the organized Christian faith, yet I feel that I can find it in the life and words of the man, Jesus of Nazareth, who died for the truth and remains immortal.

I don't know what men mean when they say He is the second number of the Trinity. He never, as far as I know, said anything about this Himself. I don't even know what they mean when they say that He was "the only begotten Son of God." That title he never claimed. But some things I do know about myself, my fellow men. I know, for one thing, that I know nothing about this mysterious universe, this violent thing we call life, this flux we call reality. Yet I know that I must have an attitude toward it all, must take my stand either with those who declare that it is an accident without meaning or those who declare that you, I, and every one of us are part of an immense significance and responsible for what comes of it. And I've discovered some things about Jesus, among them that He died to prove that the latter alternative is true.

I've discovered this by studying Him as a man, not a mythological being, and by studying His life closely in an effort to get at the facts, as I would study the life of any great historical character. And I know now that He loved his fellow men enough to die for them, that He had set himself the utterly simple but tremendous task of saving them from themselves, and that He knew how to do it. There was no doubt in His mind at a time when the minds of men were filled with doubt, when orthodox churches were dead and old religions were crumbling. While all the philosophers of the world were discussing the great illusion of the cosmos, He, Jesus of Nazareth, declared that the world was neither an illusion nor an insoluble enigma but a creation of God's spirit that men could perfectly understand if they would only love God with all their hearts and all their souls and become, like Himself, innocent children of God. And I know that He knew that, if men would do this, He would succeed in his tremendous, utterly simple business of ushering in the Kingdom of Heaven-on-Earth. This was the truth He believed, and He died because He believed this and so that men might believe it as He did.

And if religion, as religion, means anything to me, it means this: that I believe Jesus Christ was right and I believe that what He said was true.

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NEW DEALERS OF THE 'SEVENTIES

Henry George and Edward Bellamy

BY IDA M. TARBELL

No one can complain that the depression of the 1930's has been silently endured. The air for four, long years now has been filled with a clamor of conflicting sounds, soothing explanations drowned by bitter accusations, counsels to hope stilled by cries of despair, prayers answered by sneers — a turmoil in which those who suffered most made the least noise and in which only the trained ear heard the steady, rhythmic undertone of millions who grimly plied their saws.

Much of the outcry has come from men and women peddling social and economic plans hastily assembled — old remedies couched in up-to-date terminology and fitted to the conditions of the moment. There has not yet been time to create, only to assemble and experiment. Besides, while men who challenge their own and others' unhappy experiences in society are not rare, what is rare is a man who patiently collects and relates those experiences; analyzes each to its root; gets at causes; compares his conclusion with those of men of the past who have done as he is doing; and out of all his observing, comparing, challenging, and defending finds what he believes to be the bottom cause — that which must be utterly destroyed if things are to right themselves — finds it and sticks to it. That takes time and patience and faith that knowing what you are about works better in the long run than any amount of guessing, even if often lucky.

Such men are rare, but a depression which lasts long enough produces them. The severest of the immediate predecessors of "our" depression ("immediate" meaning any thing since the Civil War) — that of the 1870's — turned out two men, the like of whose voices has not been heard in the present turmoil. One of them, Henry George, by a long inquiry convinced himself as well as tens of thousands of his fellows that he had found the cause of depressions. There are to-day multitudes in all parts of the world who believe that he was right and sneer at all our present planning as nothing more than building on a rotten foundation.

The other man, Edward Bellamy, set his imagination to work on the materials he saw men about him using, some of it so mistrusted that it was marked for destruction. And out of this material he organized an ideal society so plausible that thousands to-day turn their tired eyes to it as the society of the future, measuring the New Deal by Bellamy's Great Trust of the year 2000.

Both men went deliberately at their tasks, weary of the inhuman extremes of the society of which they were a part. But these were no greater than we see to-day. Stepping out of a cab at the Grand Central Station in New York last winter, I looked into the eyes of a boy of sixteen, with a decent, intelligent face. Shivering in thin clothes, he solicited clients for his shoe brush. It was the contrast of the boy and his background which rooted me to the spot. Behind the huge plate-glass window in front of which he stood, a gay pyramid of baskets piled with rare fruits and rarer sweets and bedecked with multi-colored ribbons reared its brilliant and costly self. I knew the price of those baskets. That boy would not make in a week as many cents as the dollars the window behind him represented.

It was a study in values. Probably nobody, even the man buying the basket, would argue that the money he was spending would not be more justly, as well as wisely, spent on the boy. But how get it to him? A gift solves nothing. How get it to him by the natural operation of a sound economic system? What can we do about it? Most of us answer, if we answer at all, as poor Mr. Taft did, when years ago he was heckled by a Cooper Union audience as to what he would do about it. "God knows!" he replied.

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Edward Bellamy

Portraits by Charles John

But neither George nor Bellamy was willing to leave it to God. They were religious men, and their religion had convinced them that it was man's indifference to God's laws that was the trouble with society. This they took it upon themselves to prove.

Henry George Writes a Book

George, the elder by twenty years, was the first to set about the task. His life — up to the day he set out to run down the cause of depressions and so find a cure — had been admirably adapted to familiarize him with the fantastic contrasts of society. In many ways he had been lucky, as such things are reckoned. He had been born into an honest, thoughtful, kindly, industrious family. He could have had a good conventional education but he would not take it and at seventeen went to sea — a long voyage, which took him to far places, to Singapore and Melbourne, and showed him the contrasts of wealth and poverty a sailor sees in great ports. He came back and learned a printer's trade but failed to earn his living, went again to sea, headed this time for San Francisco. In 1858, when he arrived, the gold fever was raging all up and down the West Coast. He hoped to make his pile but failed. He saw queer things that set him to thinking — hundreds of men prospecting, digging, opening new fields and a dozen or so finally owning it all. He saw thousands building railroads, preparing great territories for settlement, laying out towns and then scattering, leaving their conquests to the ownership of a few hundred, some of whom had never laid eyes on their possessions. What did it mean?

Why should there be no land free near Sacramento for those who would build homes, till the soil? Why should it all be held in idleness for the increase in value the growth of the city and state were sure one day to bring? By what right?

Why, with mountains clothed with trees ready for cutting, should builders be forced to bring lumber from distant places at great expense? By what right could a few men hold for higher prices these hundreds of thousands of acres of timber land?

And these who simply held the land were rich, while those who would work it, make homes on it were poor. Wherever he turned, he found contrasts of wealth and poverty which shocked, challenged him. It had always been so. Wherever he had lived or traveled, he had heard men boasting of the country's progress, had known they were right but even in knowing it had seen how poverty increased with progress.

Failing to find gold, George took to his trade and began to write. He became an editor — a militant editor — attacking arrogance and corruption wherever he met it and he met it on every side in the California of the '60's. The Southern and Central Pacific railroads, the Associated Press, the Western Union were among the powers he assailed.

He began sloughing off many of the doctrines taught in Philadelphia in his youth — among them the protective tariff. But, whatever he was doing, deep in his mind was that puzzling question of the land, its concentration into a few hands. He was beginning to suspect that here might be the bottom cause of depressions, the reason why poverty not only went along with but outran a country's increasing wealth. He wrote articles about it, made speeches, testing his growing conviction, trying it out on others. Finally he reached a point where he needed to think the thing through. He managed a half-time job and in August of 1877 sat

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down with his problem. When he came to the end of his task, twenty months later, he wrote:

> I have in this inquiry followed the course of my own thought. When in mind, I set out on it I had no theory to support, no conclusions to prove. Only, when I first realized the squalid misery of a great city, it appalled and tormented me, and would not let me rest, for thinking of what caused it and how it could be cured.

George's book, which he called *Progress and Poverty*, with the long subtitle, *An inquiry into the cause of Industrial Depressions and of increase of want with increase of wealth: The Remedy*, appeared late in the year it was finished. It had a remarkable press, a press which was an indication of the restless mind of the day and which expressed its grateful satisfaction for a complete piece of thinking. The reviewers of this country and England — and there were many of them — were one in calling the book, "bold, original, scholarly." It had a "notable spirit of candor," an "engaging style"; "no one could afford to neglect it." There was almost universal praise for the clarity and solidity of the reasoning which led George up to his Remedy, but almost unanimous damning of the Remedy itself.

The road by which he reached his solution was bold, arresting, for here George challenged the accepted notion that capital was the basic factor in creating wealth. It was this theory, George held, that had turned labor into a commodity, made it dependent on capital, made the two natural enemies. By analysis he tore down the structure. Where did capital come from? You say it is the wealth piled up each year over and above what is needed to keep the country going. But where does that wealth come from? What is it but the fruit of labor applied to the land? God gave man the land, but man has to use his hand and brain in its cultivation before he can feed and clothe and shelter himself. It is the partnership of the two — land and labor — which produces wealth. If there is a surplus, we call it capital, and this capital is used by labor to increase wealth. Instead of capital being necessary to labor, it is labor which creates capital, keeps it alive. Without it, capital is a dead weight.

How has it come about that capital now holds itself superior to labor? Is not the chief reason that capital, seeing that land is necessary to labor, has cornered it, closed it to labor?

Henry George

Labor has been made dependent on capital by capital's theft of the land which God gave to all. Free the land, return it to the people as a whole. The land, he argued, could not justly be alienated any more than air or sunshine. Men should be allowed to use it in any amount they could properly handle but never to hold it after they ceased to use it. For this use they should pay its full worth, as they do now, but this rent should go to the community to be used for the expense of government. There would be enough of it to care abundantly for the needs of the people, and it would wipe out all other forms of taxes — on imports, personal property, inheritance, incomes. It would be the one and only tax — the Single Tax.

It was a lucky moment for such an argument to appear. The cry for a return of the land to the people was heard in more than one country. "Land and liberty" was the slogan of the nihilists of Russia. The demand for the nationalization of Irish lands was rocking Great Britain, and the Irish in New York were organizing to help in the struggle.

He Becomes a Politician

George, who went from San Francisco to New York as soon as *Progress and Poverty* appeared, threw himself whole-heartedly into

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the Irish fight; wrote a pamphlet for them; joined Michael Davitt, who had come over to campaign; proved himself an excellent speaker; was invited to Great Britain for a series of lectures; went for three months and stayed a year; and earned for himself an immense following among laboring men. J. Ramsay MacDonald, then a youth, has told of the effect on his mind of *Progress and Poverty*. There is no question but that the book helped in making a British labor party possible.

When George returned to America he was, as he himself said, "a famous man." "If I live I am going to fill a large place and do a large work." American labor welcomed him at once as its interpreter in its fight to raise itself from the position of a commodity. Robert T. Ely, who at that moment was making a survey of the labor movement in the United States, says that tens of thousands of laborers, who had never before looked between the covers of an economics book, were reading *Progress and Poverty* and were accepting its conclusions as articles of faith.

In 1886 the United Labor Party of New York City decided to enter the mayoralty race and persuaded George to become a candidate. He consented because it gave him a platform for his land policies. It was a great campaign, one of the most exciting the town has ever known. George had the strongest opponents the opposing parties could muster. Abram S. Hewitt, who had read *Progress and Poverty* and held it high, headed the Democratic ticket; Theodore Roosevelt, who probably had not read the book, since he later spoke of George as an "utterly cheap reformer," was chosen by the Republicans. Hewitt won by some twenty-two thousand votes. George ran ahead of Roosevelt by about eight thousand. He himself believed that he had been counted out, and there were those, even in the opposing camps, who agreed with him.

George was now in politics. The causes of his supporters were his causes. He needed a newspaper and founded the *Standard*, where in turn he fought for the shorter day, the recognition of unions, and the political candidates of labor. When his eloquent Catholic supporter, Father Edward McGlynn (the Father Coughlin of that day), resisted the effort of the Church to stop his political campaigning for George and the Single Tax, George took the case into the *Standard* and waged a long, vigorous fight for free speech and McGlynn.

To unite his Single Tax supporters, he and his colleagues on the *Standard* founded the Anti-Poverty Society, devoted to spreading

> by such peaceful and lawful means as may be found most desirable and efficient a knowledge of the truth that God has made ample provision for the need of all men during their residence upon earth, and that involuntary poverty is the result of the human laws that allow individuals to claim as private property that which the creator has provided for the use of all.

But the Single Tax was no longer a shining sword in the hand of a knight of a single purpose. By entering politics, George had confused his fight and made opponents of many who otherwise would have been at least tolerant friends, people who for political reasons were quite willing to let Roosevelt's characterization of him go undisputed, though they knew it to be both unfair and untrue.

But nothing ever had or would stop George when there was a wrong to fight, and he wore himself out writing books and articles, lecturing, sticking to his work in spite of the warnings of his physician until 1897, when he died.

But there was too much vitality in his ideas for them to die with him. For a number of years during and after the World War, I did yearly a few weeks of lyceum work. It took me from coast to coast and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf. Never did I speak, where it was the practice to allow questions, that the Single Tax was not brought under discussion, no matter what the original subject. If there was no forum, invariably someone would approach me to argue that I was offering nothing but palliatives and that the only solution was free land. I concluded that there is no place in the country where George was not alive.

And there is no place in the thinking world where he is not still read, where he has not followers, singly or in groups. He is inextricably woven into the liberal thought of the world. Thousands can consciously trace the effect on their thinking of *Progress and Poverty*, but there are tens of thousands who have unconsciously absorbed its teachings. If we could get at the roots of the New Deal of to-day we would find none stronger than Henry George.

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Edward Bellamy, Artist

The depression of the 1870's gave us Henry George, and it also gave us Edward Bellamy. There have been many ideal societies constructed for us by able writers in the last hundred years — William Morris, William Dean Howells, H. G. Wells — but there has never been one which gained the lasting hold on popular imagination or which carried with it such a sense of something reasoned, workable, and fool-proof as that of Edward Bellamy.

Like George, Bellamy had been driven to his undertaking by the parade of progress and poverty which had passed before his eyes since his youth. At eighteen, traveling in Europe, it was not cathedrals and monuments and palaces he saw but the poverty of men, the hardships of women. He came home to the harrowing exhibits of the depression of the '70's and could not escape or ignore its miseries.

Bellamy was thirty-six when, in 1887, he sat down, as had Henry George, "with the definite purpose," so he said later, "of trying to reason out a method of economic organization by which the republic might guarantee the livelihood and material welfare of its citizens on a basis of equality corresponding to and supplementing their political equality." As he saw it, the Declaration of Independence itself guaranteed not only political but economic equality, and he set out to create a state in which the guarantee should be fulfilled.

Bellamy was an artist. There is no foretelling what the imagination of the artist will seize upon. Its sensitiveness is altogether personal and seemingly erratic, but, if the artist heeds it, the return is worth while. The most important piece of building material Bellamy's imagination turned up, that which became the central pillar of his structure, was the social significance of the form of industrial organization which was horrifying the country at the moment — the trust. He was by no means blind to the greed and malefaction and political chicanery that were going into the making of the trusts but he saw behind them and realized that here was a form of organization which, used for the benefit of the public and not for private gain alone, would make for order, efficiency, abundance. Building on this central notion, Bellamy organized his ideal society. He introduced it in a book called *Looking Backward*, whose hero, Julian West, a Boston Back Bay gentleman, goes to sleep in his home in 1887 and awakes in the same place in the year 2000.

It is a new world this man finds; it has taken a century to do for Boston what Lincoln Steffens and Edward Filene and their friends once hoped to do in ten but it has been done and thoroughly done. Not only Boston but the United States and "most of Europe" are remade.

Julian West's host of the year 2000 tells him what happened. He pictures the growth of the trusts after the Civil War, their oppression and their piracies but also their part in the rapid increase of the world's markets, the final reluctant conclusion of the opponents of consolidations of capital that restoring the old system, even if that were possible, would be at the price of universal poverty and the arresting of material progress.

"Was there, then, no way of commanding the services of the mighty wealth-producing principle of consolidated capital without bowing down to a plutocracy like that of Carthage?" As soon as men began to ask themselves such questions, they found the answer ready for them. The movement toward the conduct of business by larger and larger aggregations of capital, the tendency toward monopolies, which had been so desperately and vainly resisted, was recognized at last, in its true significance, as a process which needed only to complete its logical evolution to open a golden future to humanity.

> Early in the last century [i.e. along about 1934!], the evolution was completed by the final consolidation of the entire capital of the nation. The industry and commerce of the country, ceasing to be conducted by a set of irresponsible corporations and syndicates of private persons at their caprice and for their profit, were entrusted to a single syndicate representing the people, to be conducted in the common interest for the common profit. The nation, that is to say, organized as the one great business corporation in which all other corporations were absorbed; it became the one capitalist in the place of all other capitalists, the sole employer, the final monopoly in which all previous and lesser monopolies were swallowed up, a monopoly in the profits and economies of which all citizens shared. The epoch of trusts had ended in The Great Trust. In a word, the people of the United States concluded to assume the conduct of their own business, just as one hundred odd years before they had assumed the conduct of their own

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government, organizing now for industrial purposes on precisely the same grounds that they had then organized for political purposes. At last, strangely late in the world's history, the obvious fact was perceived that no business is so essentially the public business as the industry and commerce on which the people's livelihood depends, and that to entrust it to private persons to be managed for private profit is a folly similar in kind, though vastly greater in magnitude, to that of surrendering the functions of political government to kings and nobles to be conducted for their personal glorification.

The Democratic Revolution

It certainly was natural that Julian West, with the conditions of 1887, in mind should have remarked that such stupendous changes must have cost "great bloodshed and terrible convulsions." But listen to this.

Not at all, there was absolutely no violence. The change had been long foreseen. Public opinion had become fully ripe for it, and the whole mass of the people was behind it. There was no more possibility of opposing it by force than by argument. On the other hand the popular sentiment toward the great corporations and those identified with them had ceased to be one of bitterness, as they came to realize their necessity as a link, a transition phase, in the evolution of the true industrial system. The most violent foes of the great private monopolies were now forced to recognize how invaluable and indispensable had been their office in educating the people up to the point of assuming control of their own business. Fifty years before, the consolidation of the industries of the country under national control would have seemed a very daring experiment to the most sanguine. But by a series of object lessons, seen and studied by all men, the great corporations had taught the people an entirely new set of ideas on this subject. They had seen for many years syndicates handling revenues greater than those of states, and directing the labors of hundreds of thousands of men with an efficiency and economy unattainable in smaller operations. It had come to be recognized as an axiom that the larger the business the simpler the principles that can be applied to it; that, as the machine is truer than the hand, so the system, which in a great concern does the work of the master's eye in a small business, turns out more accurate results. Thus it came about that, thanks to the corporations themselves, when it was proposed that the nation should assume their functions, the suggestion implied nothing which seemed impracticable even to the timid. To be sure it was a step beyond any yet taken, a broader generalization, but the very fact that the nation would be the sole corporation in the field would, it was seen, relieve the undertaking of many difficulties with which the partial monopolies had contended.

If Bellamy was to reconcile his readers to one Great Trust, he had to show them a state which was a good place in which to live. Physically, he made it delightful. Every intimation that science had given of miracles to be (all of them since realized) he seized, developed, built into the homes and towns of the year 2000. Your house would know no variations of heat and cold; its lighting was to be indirect; by the pressure of a button, music flooded its rooms at any hour, music of the kind you liked, for there were always four different programs available. It came to you free, its sponsor the state, not a maker of gasoline or gum or toothpaste.

You sat in your library of a Sunday morning and listened to your family preacher, saw him in his pulpit if you wished — for Bellamy had applied the principles of television already known — and you could, if you wished, look at any public gathering in town. You traveled by air-car where you would. Housekeeping had become co-operation, its drudgeries wiped out, its comforts and delights multiplied. Even snow and rain were no longer disturbing, for, when they came, towns covered their streets. "In the Nineteenth Century," laughed Julian West, "when it rained the people of Boston put up three hundred thousand umbrellas over as many heads and in the Twentieth Century they put up one umbrella over all the heads."

The Artist Becomes a Crusader

It was a beautiful, orderly, peaceful state which Bellamy pictured and it came as an escape at a moment of tumult and uncertainty. Ten years had gone since the depression of the '70's had been officially pronounced "over," but, save in times of war, the country had never experienced such unrest. Farmer and laborer had continued to upset the state of things, and violence and bloodshed swept over towns and cities. Here was a hope and a prophecy. Here was that thing most feared in the industrial state, the trust, made the very keystone of Utopia!

Looking Backward quickly became a best-seller. Edward Bok, in his *Americanization* story, claims that it was his plan for advertising which started the book. However that may be, it was not long before the reading world here and abroad was discussing it. Rapidly it became the bible of a new cult — nationalism (not to be confused with patriotic nationalism) — of which Bellamy was the prophet.

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It is doubtful if Bellamy had foreseen the birth of a movement of his own, but, when the yeast began to foam, he left the quiet Massachusetts home where he had always lived and worked, came to Boston, and threw himself utterly into the effort to convince the country that it had already in its hand the making of a happy future.

Converts multiplied; Bellamy clubs spread over the country, appeared in England, Germany. The enthusiasm, the numbers of the nationalists alarmed the conservatives, and the movement was attacked as revolutionary, socialistic, ridiculous, Utopian. Bellamy went into the defense with a gusto. His friends had not believed in him, and with his own funds he started a newspaper, *The New Nation*, with which to fight the battle.

His chief task now was to show how men and women, fit and willing to live under such a perfect state and to continue it, could be produced. It was obvious that those of the '90's could not be trusted with so fine a social mechanism. It was equally sure that the majority was too unregenerate to enjoy its perfections. He must do a second book and this he did in 1897. *Equality* is the title he gave it.

It would not have been surprising if *Equality* had been an anticlimax to *Looking Backward*. It does lack the earlier work's fresh, imaginative quality, its charm of narrative but for those who were taking this new industrial state seriously it was full of meat. In it Bellamy takes care of the criticism he had aroused and shows in detail how his state would function.

It is in *Equality* that he sets down his plan for training and disciplining citizens. It is no easy system he pictures. For twenty-one years the state educates and trains all youth. There is no escape. The next three years, or until he is twenty-four, the individual gives to unskilled labor of various kinds. This is the period in which he demonstrates his aptitudes, if any, while the quality of his intelligence is tested. Then follows an apprenticeship in the trade or art or profession chosen or assigned. At every stage there is strict grading; to the best men go the choicest positions — not choicest in credits (the annual income which each person, young and old, would receive from the state) but choicest in opportunity to use talent, experiment, create.

But how win man's cheerful acceptance of such intensive and continuous discipline? The wise men of the year 2000 not only lived and preached the humanity, justice, and beauty of their life, but they devised various ways of visualizing for the people the horrors of pre-Revolutionary times — our times! One such way was the erection in conspicuous places in towns and cities of what were called Ghost Buildings. Julian West describes "a typical Nineteenth Century tenement house of the worst sort." Over the door is the inscription, "This habitation of cruelty is preserved as a memento to coming generations of the rule of the rich."

There seems to have been no recognition that this so-called "rule of the rich" had produced not only vile but also model tenements. It had laid, too, the very foundations of the organization in which the Utopians eventually found security, justice, and universal culture.

What They Left Behind

The fervor, the conviction, the religious intensity with which Bellamy struggled to establish his cult wore him out. *Equality* may be said to have killed him, for, exhausted, he died in 1898, the year after Henry George.

But death did not end his work. From the day they were published until now, both *Looking Backward* and *Equality* have sold steadily. To-day, as in 1898, groups bearing Bellamy's name gather regularly in this and other lands to study his plan for the perfect industrial state. Of all Utopias which men, revolting against the bitter world in which we live, have created to stir the imagination and raise the hopes of the people of the earth, none has ever been so substantial, so realistic, so seemingly practical. A dream — yes — but a dream built upon materials in our hands. No one can estimate its true influence, for, like George's great challenge to depressions, Bellamy's new nation is woven into the thinking of this people. If out of the depression of the 1930's there is to come a veritable New Deal, it will in no small measure be because these two products of the depression of the 1870's lived and labored, even to death, to convince their fellows, the one, that poverty is no legitimate child of progress, the other, that a happier world waits our making.

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WAR IS A RACKET

BY SMEDLEY D. BUTLER

War is a racket; possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only one international in scope.

A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few at the expense of the masses.

Out of war a few people make huge fortunes. Nations acquire additional territory (which is promptly exploited by the few for their own benefit), and the general public shoulders the bill — a bill that renders a horrible accounting of newly placed gravestones, mangled bodies, shattered minds, broken hearts and homes, economic unstability, and back-breaking taxation of the many for generations and generations.

For long years I have known that war is a racket but I never faced it until I saw the clouds gathering again, as they are to-day. They are choosing sides now. France and Russia meet and agree to stand side by side. Germany and Italy hurry to make a similar agreement.

In the Orient, the maneuvering is more adroit. Back in 1904, when Japan and Russia fought, we kicked our old friends, the Russians, out and backed Japan, whom we were then financing. Now the trend is to poison us against the Japanese. What does China's Open Door policy mean to us? Or the Philippine Islands? Our trade with China is about $90,000,000 a year. We have spent about $600,000,000 in the Philippines in 35 years and we have private investments there of less than $200,000,000.

To save that China trade of about $90,000,000 or to protect the private investments of less than $200,000,000 in the Philippines, we may be roused to hate Japan and to go to war — to a war that may cost us tens of billions of dollars, hundreds of thousands of the lives of Americans, and many more hundreds of thousands of physically maimed and mentally unbalanced young men.

Yes, they are getting ready for another war. War, like any other racket, pays high dividends to the very few. But what does it profit the masses? Take our own nation. Until 1898, we owned no territory outside of the mainland of North America. At that time our national debt was a little more than a billion dollars. Then we became internationally minded. We went to war. We acquired outside territory. At the close of the period of the World War, as a direct result of our fiddling in international affairs, our national debt jumped to over twenty-five billion dollars. Our total foreign trade during the twenty-year period was about twenty-four billion dollars. Therefore, on a basis of simple bookkeeping, we are running a little behind year for year.

It would be far cheaper (not to say safer) for the average American, who pays the bills, to stay out of foreign entanglements. For a very few, these rackets — like bootlegging — bring fancy profits, but the cost of operations is always transferred to the people who do not profit.

II

The soldiers, of course, pay the biggest part of the bill. If you don't believe it, visit the American cemeteries on the battlefields abroad or visit any of the veterans' hospitals in the United States. On a tour of the country, in which I am engaged at the time of writing, I have seen eighteen government hospitals for veterans. In them are a total of about 50,000 destroyed men. Seventeen years ago they were the pick of the nation.

The chief surgeon at the government hos-

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Cartoon by Daniel R. Fitzpatrick

Courtesy of the St. Louis Post Dispatch

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pital at Milwaukee, where there are 3,800 of the living dead, told me that mortality among veterans is three times as great as among those who stayed at home. Boys with a normal viewpoint were taken out of the fields and offices and factories and classrooms and put into the ranks. There they were remolded; they were made over; they were made to "about face," to regard murder as the order of the day. They were put shoulder to shoulder and, through mass psychology, they were made into machines for slaughter. We trained them to kill other men with nonchalance and dispatch. We used them a couple of years.

Then, suddenly, we discharged them and told them to make another "about face." Only this time they had to do their own readjusting, without mass psychology, without officers' aid and advice, without nation-wide propaganda. We turned them loose without three-minute speeches, without parades. Many, too many, of these fine young boys were eventually destroyed mentally, because they could not make that final "about face" alone.

In the government hospital at Marion, Ohio, 1,800 wrecks are in pens. Five hundred are in a barrack, under nurses, with wires all around the buildings and enclosing the porches. All have been mentally destroyed. They don't even look like human beings. A careful study of their expressions is highly recommended as an aid to the understanding of the art of war.

There are thousands and thousands of these cases, and more and more are coming in all the time. That is part of the bill.

III

DON'T FORGET that the soldier pays part of the dollars-and-cents bill, too. Up to and including the Spanish-American War, we had a prize system, and soldiers and sailors fought for money. During the Civil War they were paid bonuses, in many instances, before they went into service. The federal government or the states paid as high as $1,200 for an enlistment. In the Spanish-American War they gave prize money. When we captured vessels, the soldiers all got their share. Then it was found that we could reduce the cost of wars by taking all the prize money and keeping it but conscripting the soldier anyway. Everyone else can bargain for his labor, but the soldier can't.

Napoleon once said, "All men are enamored of decorations . . . they positively hunger for

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them." So, by developing the Napoleonic system — the medal business — the government learned it could get soldiers for less money, because boys like to be decorated. Until the Civil War, there were no medals. Then the Congressional Medal of Honor was instituted. It made enlistments easier.

In the World War, we used propaganda to make the boys accept conscription. They were made ashamed of not joining the Army. It was then decided to make the soldier help pay for the war, too. So we gave him a large salary — $30 a month. All he had to do for that munificent sum was to give up his job, leave everything he knew and loved behind, brave death and injury, lie in swampy trenches, eat canned willy (when he could get it), and kill and kill and kill . . . and be killed.

But wait.

Half of that wage (just a little more in a month than a riveter in a shipyard or a laborer in a munitions factory made in a day) was promptly taken from him to support his dependents, so that they would not become a charge upon the nation. Then we made him pay what amounted to accident insurance — something the employer pays for in an enlightened state — and that cost him $6.60 a month. He had less than $9 a month left. Then — the most crowning insolence of all — he was virtually blackjacked into paying for his own ammunition, clothing, and food by making him buy Liberty Bonds. Most soldiers got no money at all on paydays. But they bought Liberty Bonds at $100, and then we bought them back, when they had returned from the war and couldn't find work, at $84. And the soldiers bought about $2,000,000,000 worth of them.

Until we arrive at a stage where public officeholders, those who govern us, have more consideration for the safety and welfare and happiness of the people as a whole than for the success of any political party or small group, we will have wars and other rackets of all kinds.

But there is a way to stop this racket. It cannot be smashed by disarmament conferences, by peace parleys at Geneva, by resolutions of well-meaning but impractical groups. It can be effectively smashed only by taking the profit out of war.

The only way to stop it is by conscription of capital before conscription of the nation's manhood. One month before the government may order the young men of the nation to be killed, it must serve notice of conscription on the country's capital.

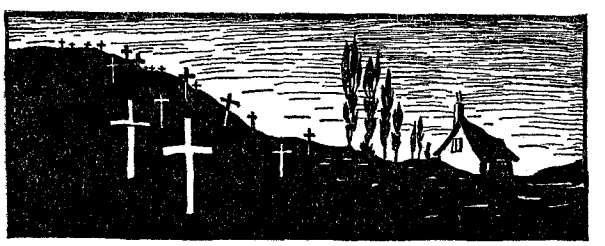
Let the officers and directors of our armament factories, our gun builders and munitions makers and shipbuilders all be conscripted — to get $30 a month, the same wage paid to the lads in the trenches.

Let the workers in these plants get the same wage. All workers, all executives, all presidents, all directors, all managers — everyone in the nation be restricted to a total monthly income not to exceed that paid to the soldier in the trenches.

Let all these kings and tycoons and masters of industry and all these workers in industry pay half of their monthly $30 wage to their families and pay insurance and buy government bonds.

Why shouldn't they? They aren't running the risk of being killed or having their bodies mangled or their minds shattered. The soldiers run that risk.

Give capital thirty days to think it over and you will learn by that time that there will be no war. That will stop the racket — that and nothing else.



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A WOMAN PLOWS IN COTTON

BY JULIA HOUSTON RAILEY

Scissor cuts by Helen Hatch

"IF THAT'S James coming to see me," said my mother from the window, "I think I shall scream."

James is the Negro foreman of her modest four-hundred-acre cotton farm in the bayou bottoms of our southern state. His other name is bad news. Nothing ever brings him to town between my mother's inspection trips but trouble, of which she has had an overproduction since 1927, with consequences to her health. Flood, drought, famine, depression, and five-cent cotton have been hard on her blood pressure, but the hardest is James.

Somebody's mule must have died, I thought, or well gone dry or house burned down, to be bringing James up. But my mother had no need to guess.

"He wants to know," she said grimly, "how much longer twenty-one families must starve to death while I'm making up my mind to ask for a Government loan. Am I to answer ten million questions and persuade the RACC to lend me enough to run the place this year or quit sinking good money after bad and give up — that's the question. And I don't know myself yet, so I can't tell him a thing!"

She got to her feet, looking hunted, and I, with the rashness of one long away from the land, volunteered:

"Let me take it on. You go lie down and be too sick to see him."

Thus, fortuitously, began my experiences as an amateur lady cotton farmer, under Government grant in the hinterlands of the Deep South.

HOW NEAR TO WHERE?

"YES, JAMES?" I began briskly enough, the whish of the new broom sounding through my words. "Suppose we start by lining up a little information for these Government loan application blanks of the Regional Agricultural Credit Corporation — just in case we do apply for the loan. We needn't worry my mother with the red tape."

I pulled out a folding form several feet in length, north to south, and James squinted at it, a hand's breadth from his nose.

"Yes'm," he said at last, dejectedly, handing it back. "Yes'm."

"Well," I urged with slight impatience, pencil and note pad ready, "first questions first. What *is* the 'specific address' of the farm, and how far from what highway?"

"You means how fur *wuz* it by de reg'lar road, ma'am, befo' de bridge washed out or how fur *is* it now thu de fields?"

"Why, er, it just says how far is it. I guess it means as the crow flies. That must be it — as the crow flies."

"Dat I wouldn't know, ma'am," said James, sitting back definitely.

"Well — roughly."

"You means by de surveys or by de achel way you gits dere?"

Surveys. That was a thought. I said in a brief, business-like way that I'd look it up on the records at the courthouse, but James reminded me that the farm was not in this but

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the next county. Heavens! Correspondence with the county clerk or surveyor or assessor or whatever-you-might-call-'em, just to find out where you were?

"What's the name of this highway, James?"

He frowned. "Well'm, it don't have no rightful name, 's fur's I know — just de Goshen Pike, leadin' on down to de State line."

"What *has* it got — a number?"

Beaming approval of my perspicacity and quick wit. "Yes'm, sho, sho — got a number."

"What number?"

This drew a blank. I'd have to find that out from some highway official. "Less'n yo' mother wuz to know or somebody livin' down our way —"

At least we now knew how to begin to commence to find out how near we were to where. But did we? James had another thought:

"Still an' all, ma'am," he reflected uneasily, "de Gov'ment got to know, too, how deir inspectin' man gwine git to us f'um de main road, ain't dey? What branch road to take an' how fur to come?"

There ensued a tortuous routing by my black Baedeker. If the swearing representative of the U.S.A. didn't bog up in ol' Miz Curtis' swamp lan' and have to walk, then he could maybe git his car thu, first, the several gates of Cun'l Atkinson's place and a fork of the bayou at the ford, thence via three more plantations to ours —

"No," I interrupted with firmness, "we will write at the top of Form 20: 'N.B. Agent is referred to Heeney's General Store, Goshen, for directions to the blank place.' That's that!"

James was relieved. Beyond tipping me off that "specific address" doubtless meant the land numbers and description obtainable from my mother's tax receipts, our half-hour discussion of point one, Form 15 ended. All we had ahead of us now was dozens of pages of form questions; these to be followed, on the loan's being granted, it transpired, by dozens of other pages, while of course in the fall there would be a third series of blanks to report what we had spent, made, lost, raised, and failed to raise.

James and I plunged right in, hub-deep. But it was miry going.

"How much does it cost to feed a mule a month, James?"

"What size mule, ma'am?"

"Why — an average mule, say."

"Dat's sump'n I ain' never yit seed — a average mule," observed my foreman.

Striking a norm in the curve of appetite, we arrived at $4.50 to $5 a month per mule, but those figures were dependent upon the price of corn and hay at the moment. I began to perceive the unreliability of farming statistics, at least from the worm's-eye view of my amateur self.

"How many acres," for example, had we "planted to cotton in 1931 and '32?" James had only the foggiest notion. It was never measured exactly as parceled out in some fifteen tenant holdings and in turn to their share croppers. For her cotton rent, my mother took a fourth of the bales ginned, so no question of acreage entered.

How many horses, mules, cows, yearlings, calves, pigs, chickens, wagons, turning plows, middlebusters, "Georgia stocks," planters, harrows were there? No idea. James would have to "ast" each tenant.

Assigning James a series of field-research problems and taking on, myself, what bade fair to be a complete audit of my mother's net worth, we wearily called it a day. I made an appointment with him to meet our tenantry at Heeney's General Store in Goshen on Saturday next, there to expound what all must say, sign, and do to be saved by Uncle Sam. We parted on a note of hope, despite the hard-luck stories James managed to get in.

De Gov'ment Gets Snubbed

Saturday, at Goshen, inside Heeney's store, with its smelly assortment of humans and cheap clothes, feed, groceries, tobacco, and farm sundries, I found the Negroes gathered round a red-hot central stove, sociably spitting, chewing, and snuff-dipping. Most of them were women. James' wife, thin, freckled, and pop-eyed, was nursing a dissatisfied baby.

I smiled brightly about upon my vassals, as James did the honors of introduction, but met with guarded, taciturn response. They were evidently suspicious of my New Deal. My mother had warned me that few could write their names, many still wore charms round their necks, and most were afraid of banks, policemen, and all agents of government. Also, that, while they trusted her, that trust was

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not necessarily transferable. Strategy was indicated.

Enlighten the more intelligent, I reasoned; then the whole crowd would tail along. I began with the prize tenants, leading them into Mr. Heeney's private office, garnished with a chair, stove, and table. While one built a fire, I engaged the other, a clean, dependable man of affairs named 'Bijah, in expository discourse.

Ten minutes sufficed to sell the RACC to 'Bijah and to Cephas, a smart little yellow man. These departed, with James, as missionaries to the heathen in outer darkness. Pretty soon here came the whole crew, shuffling sheepishly in.

Old Aunt Rhoda Meacham coughed so rackingly I seated her near the stove and sent out for medicine. On second thought, "old Aunt Rhoda," as a description, is misleading — she was not a pathetic figure, she was grim, with the impassiveness of some gaunt pioneer woman defending her doorstep. The matriarch of the plantation, almost all the families were somehow related to her. Aunt Rhoda's oldest daughter apparently had no other name than Sweetchile, a misnomer for a yellow tabby.

Three or four restive children enlivened matters. James' baby had a dirty, white string around her neck; it held a cricket's nest, of therapeutic value in teething. One magnificent young buck, with a physique like Paul Robeson's, towered above the others. His name was Deedy.

Trouble began immediately. In the annual chattel mortgage that each tenant customarily gave my mother and stood ready to sign today, along with a note covering his estimated year's budget, no one had ever been asked to put up his cows and pigs, wagons and farm tools as security, but only his mules and crop. If my mother wasn't interested in their cows and such, why was the Government? This was Aunt Rhoda's pertinent query.

Because, I said, this year the Government was taking the mortgages, not my mother. Stunned silence! I inquired hastily if they didn't think it was better for each tenant to deal directly with his Government? Response was prompt. No, *ma'am*, they certainly did not! They'd have no dealings with a predatory Uncle Sam — no traffic with the devil!

I argued and pleaded, James feebly abetting. Finally I brought forward an alternative which even to me sounded pretty alarming. It was that each sign a bill of sale to my mother, transferring everything he owned, it being stated in these RACC documents that she had that day paid them so much for their posses-

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sions, when in reality she hadn't paid a cent. They would then become merely share croppers, and she, the tenant under mortgage to the Government.

To my amazement the skies cleared.

"You means we turns eve'ything over to her, an' she stan's 'twixt us an' de Gov'ment?" one Lonville Jackson inquired.

"Exactly. But —"

There were nods of approval: "Dat's all right . . . Sho' . . . Good idy."

"Yes," I said conscientiously, "but I want you to realize what you're doing. You're signing away everything to my mother. She could lawfully keep your property, if she were that kind of woman."

"Yes'm," said Cephas, "but she ain't."

Deedy summed up:

"Ef it takes dis to humor de Gov'ment an' git us our loan, why I say le's eve'ybody sign an' quit talkin'."

So, followed by my flock of thirty black sheep, with the lambs trailing, I proceeded across the railroad tracks to the notary's office. There my charges lined up and signed or marked, without a murmur, four sets of incriminating documents — mortgages, waivers, and what not — rendering them cheerful paupers.

In triumph I reported all this. Why my mother smiled so pityingly on me I failed to see.

Sweeny and Shoebones

Days dragged, and James and other hands kept bobbing up, vocal with complaint at the delay. Planting time was right on them. What was the Gov'ment waitin' for? They jus' had to have fo' new mules right *now*. ("To ride to the store," interpolated my mother.) Wa'nt there *no* way I could hurry the busy inspector?

I had to allow them supplies on credit and finally, gambling, had to buy tools and mules the same way, announcing, however, that I'd return them all if the Government reneged. Mr. Isaacs, the leading mule dealer, smiled sourly and said, "O.K." Anything, I suppose, to quiet a lady buyer so green she plainly imagined that young mules were the progeny of old mules, after the fashion of most other properly behaved animals.

I had intended having a veterinarian check my choices but, finding the fee prohibitive, went at my purchasing with what I considered sharp, shrewd thoroughness. At length four mules were prayerfully selected, among them a large, white mare of muscular aspect and a short, stocky bay who seemed the embodiment of rugged health.

Mr. Isaacs beat me to supervision of their tagging. On the morning of shipment, a triumphal sight met my eyes. There stood the truckful of mules, all four gazing adventurously out at the world over their bars, with little white name cards tied at jaunty angles to their heads, as on Christmas presents. Below them, draped along the sides of the truck, secondhand plows and plow points dangled from a rope. In the rear flapped sheets of tin roofing.

Somewhat uneasy about the tagging, I went home. A week later my suspicions were confirmed — plus. James wrote:

> Kind Madam:
>
> The mules are here and have proved satisfaction so far. The white mule name Sadie has the sweeny in one shoulder and the thickset bay mule name Bella has the shoebones. a swelling on the stummick.
>
> Lonville Jackson say the large horse mule name Henry belong to him because his name was on it but Cephas say it is his mule because so was his. but Lonville say he wont give up his good mule less he made to so what must i do kind madam.
>
> A veterranian say Sadie about 16 to 18 year. Maybe older. she won't work now she have the sweeny.
>
> The govment inspector looked at all but Mrs. Rhodas cows which she locked up. he is coming again when she dont know it. he says the govment has got a mortgage on eveything Is that Right we thought your mother had. please advise quick
>
> I remain with respects
> Y'r obedient servant James Holland

My mother and I stared at one another in dismay.

"What in God's name is the 'sweeny'?" I asked hoarsely.

"What, for the matter of that," queried she, "is the 'shoebones'?"

Though, as good feminists, we hated to do it, we telephoned a male cousin who is a planter. "Shoebones" was charbon or anthrax, except James was probably all wet about it, he said, as it was uncommon among mules. However, we'd better send back both animals, on suspicion. What kind of mules had we been buying, anyway? Why hadn't we called him in?

While I was lamely explaining, I heard a sound from my mother which made me drop

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the receiver and run. She was bending over more mail she had opened — a thick sheaf that looked governmental — but convulsed with nothing more serious than laughter. Her forefinger pointed at a single stern official sentence in a notification that our loan had been granted:

"It is absolutely necessary that all cattle securing these loans be branded by the boring of a small hole in the left ear" — and then something I didn't read about "old markings."

"Can't you just *see* old Rhoda letting anybody bore holes in her cows' left ears?" quavered my mother.

"What are the holes *for?*" I wanted to know, chortling. "Earrings?"

Suddenly I remembered that hanging receiver.

"Tell him," begged my mother, as I went, "that if any holes are bored in Rhoda's cows he'll have to bore them for me, if he doesn't want a Government agent tarred and feathered. Rhoda knows him — he's bought turkeys from her."

"Why, sure I'll brand 'em — and see about the mules and everything," my cousin was agreeing amiably. "Why didn't youall sing out to me sooner?"

Rhoda Turns at Bay

With a soul full of gratitude to the male sex, I sat at his side in his well-worn bus that afternoon, Goshen-bound.

We debouched, after tortuous windings and joltings through other peoples' land and our own, into a clearing before Rhoda's cabin, truck patch, and barn. No livestock in sight. In response to our hail, Rhoda appeared — with a shotgun!

"Hey, old lady!" shouted my cousin, more in amusement than alarm. "Put up that gun. We're friends of yours."

"Howdy," said Rhoda unsmiling. She still held the gun. Sweetchile joined her defiantly on the porch. We approached.

"I understand you had a run-in with the Government agent," said my cousin genially, leaning on the fence in an easy pose. "We came down to see what the trouble was."

"'Tain' no trouble," said Rhoda briefly. "He jus' ain' gwine tech my cattles, dat's all."

"What'd he want to do to 'em?"

Her lean jaw set. "He wanter mark deir

years sometime wid de Gov'ment mark — so he kin ketch 'em in de woods one day an' drive 'em off an' I cain't do nothin' to he'p myse'f."

"Oh, they wouldn't do *that*," I interposed. My cousin gave me a warning glance.

"How come dey wouldn't?" demanded Sweetchile insolently.

"You shet yo' mouf, Sweetchile."

"Yeah," muttered that vixen, darting an envenomed side look at us, "dat's whut *you* done all dese years, Ma, an' look at you now. De white folks done tromped you down till dey ain' nothin' left of you."

Her mother rebuked her with calm dispassion: "Dat's bitin' de hand dat feeds you, Sweetchile. It don' become you to speak so."

Sweetchile shut up.

"Well, well," said my cousin with hearty good cheer, truly enjoying himself. "Let's have a look at those prize cows you've got locked up in your barn, Aunt Rhoda, and see how *they* feel about this."

"How you mean?"

"Maybe we could put our own mark on 'em, and then we can say they're all marked and tell those Government fellows to keep the hell away from here."

"Whut mark you gwine put?"

"What's wrong with the Government mark *and* one of our own besides — two punches instead of one?" he improvised with lightning art.

Her brow tightened. She came a step nearer. "Anybody puts a hole thu my cows' years, I

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puts a hole thu him! I does my own brandin'."

"Check!" my cousin grinned. Then he dropped his banter entirely. "I'm going in and look at your cows, old lady, and you're not going to stop me. But I promise you I won't lay a hand on 'em till you tell me to."

He looked her in the eye, and after a brief silence she lowered her gun and moved with dignity to open the door for him. I followed wonderingly into the odorous darkness. His flashlight shone on the head of one animal after another. He scrutinized each closely, though for the life of me I couldn't imagine why.

"That's all," he said politely, when he reached the last. "Just wanted to look 'em over. Well" — he was outside — "we'll be going now."

"But —" I gasped. He stepped heavily on my foot.

"Whut's gwine happen to 'em, suh?"

"Nothing," he said to her with a smile, patting her shoulder. "Absolutely nothing. You can turn 'em out now. After I talk to the agent he'll never bother you again about holes in their ears."

The smile that warmed her flinty old face made her suddenly lovable. All at once she liked us, too. She disappeared to get us some turnips.

I was well on my way to the next tenant's cabin before I saw the point. Those ragged slits in Rhoda's cows' ears — they *were* a brand, Rhoda's own brand. What had that sentence in the notice gone on to say about "old markings?" If we reported those, the Government would have its identifying marks and need no others. Cheers!

"Me an' You Bofe"

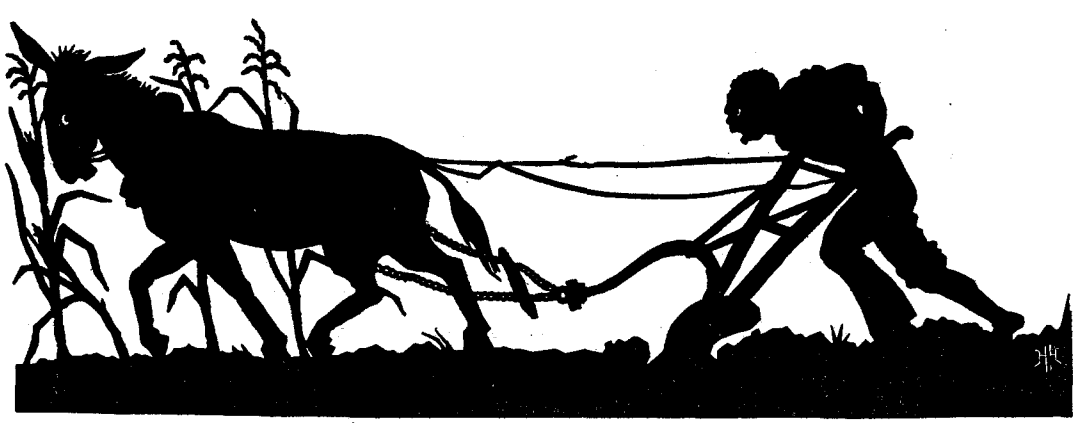
That was then. The lady cotton farmer is ready now to take stock on a season's store of experiences, though not yet on its winnings, since the full story of that cotton crop remains to be told. Most of us have collected ten cents a pound on it in loans from the Government and are holding it over for a better price.

Uncle Sam has been indulgent enough, first to lend us his good cash to plant a crop, then to give us more of his money to *un*plant half that crop, and, finally, to lend us still more so we could hold our yield for top prices!

But — has our good uncle ever tried to make his Negro tenantry understand a benevolence that fertilizes your cotton with one hand and uproots it with the other — all for your own good? Has he had to sell a colored man the idea that the way to make money is to turn under in July half the flourishing crop he planted in April?

He should have watched them plowing up the cotton row they planted — sulky black man and balky beast, children of the earth they till — their primitive souls full of dumb revolt. Civilization, with its surpluses here and shortages there, its world cotton carryovers and its shivering millions in need of clothes, its price fixings and its planned destructiveness, is too much for the brain of our dark brother. All he can do is talk to his mule:

"Whut you *whoa*-in' fur? De bigger de stalks de harder you tromps 'em down — ain't you heard dat? Mus' be you don' b'lieve all you hears? . . . Huh? . . . Me an' you bofe . . . White folks or no white folks, all dis is agin nature, dat's whut it is . . . Giddap."



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FLEDGLING

A Short Story

BY FELIX NOLAND

Drawings by Doris Spiegel

On Friday morning, when she had completely given up hope, the telephone rang, and it was Mrs. Bradford, inviting her to Frances' party! "I'm having a few of Frances' little friends to-morrow afternoon," she began.

Oh, what was the matter with her? She could scarcely get her breath to answer. "Yes'm. Thank you — very much."

"Two-thirty, Virginia. You know our house, don't you?"

"Yes, Mrs. Bradford." She pressed her forehead against the mouthpiece of the telephone, hard — hard. . . .

"Well, then — I'll expect you." There was a pause. "Oh, yes, will you ask your mother if I can have my fitting Monday, instead of to-morrow? I'll be so terribly rushed."

Away she flew to the kitchen, to ask Mother. She was slicing the bread for toast. "The party?" she asked swiftly.

Virginia nodded, trying to look casual. "And can she have her fitting Monday, instead of to-morrow?"

Yes, it was all right about the fitting. "Oh, I'm *so* glad — it's awfully kind of your mother. We'll look for you to-morrow, then, my dear." The telephone hung on the dining-room wall, and when she had replaced the receiver she leaned there for a minute, eyes closed. . . .

Oh, if only she could have told Mildred yesterday, when she came out with the dress she wanted made — if only she could have said, "I'm invited!" Mildred had talked about the party right before Mother, not realizing how everything hurt Mother now . . . since the divorce . . . every single, *little* thing. She had tried to change the subject to school, to Mildred's dress — she even had told something funny that Andy had said — but Mildred *would* come back to the party. "I thought of course you'd be invited," she said. And Virginia had said, "No."

Mother had been studying a fashion magazine, planning Mildred's dress. Although she did not raise her eyes from the book, her face went slowly blank when Mildred said that— she seemed to shrink a little. "Virginia doesn't know Frances Bradford particularly well," she said, turning a page. "How do you like this style, Mildred? Do you think your mother would like this for you?" She had tried not to look at Mother's mouth, like a fresh scab on her pale, thin face — stiff and brownish-red. From the time Father left them, over a year ago, Mother's lips had been drawn together like a long sore. Though she talked and smiled with it, her mouth had never been the same. . . . "We might put some tucks in the waist, here," she said faintly.

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"But I'm so *tired* of tucks," Mildred said, smiling. . . .

"Ginny?"

She spun around, her fingers still clinging to the telephone cord. There stood Andy, an unmistakable droop to his shoulders, kicking up puffs of dust with the toe of his shoe. "What have you lost now, Andy?"

"Aw nothin', Ginny. You haven't seen it anyway, I bet you haven't."

"*What*, darling?"

This time it was his pocket knife, and quick as a flash she found it for him, hidden far beneath the sofa — it really was an inspiration! Frowning darkly, she held it out to him. "Now listen, Andy — you simply must keep up with your own things." She hesitated. How very small he looked, how dear! Suddenly, she flung her arms around her little brother; she couldn't speak.

"Unh! Don't, Ginny — you hurt."

She let him go quickly. Her eyes fell, stopped at his hands. "Andy — look at those fingernails. Go and scrub them this instant!"

Throwing a small cloth over one end of the table, she set the plates so that practically all the stains were covered. From the kitchen came the hollow bang of the oven door, followed by a savage scraping sound. Then Jeanne's voice arose, shrill and excited. "Well, we can just throw this sugar away — the rats have been in it."

"*Rats?*"

"Mice, then." In a minute she began again. "Maybe it *is* mice but it looks like *rats!*" Really, for a child ten years old, Jeanne was a devil! She was just on the point of going out and shaking her, when she noticed a familiar smell in the air. She paused and sniffed. "Oatmeal!" she called loudly.

It was true — the oatmeal was scorched, and the scraped toast had a bitter taste — but what did any of it matter, to-day? Mother was so pleased about the party. "I knew all the time you were going to be invited," she said, "I just had a hunch."

"Mary Scanlon was invited yesterday," Jeanne said. "Roxanne told me."

Mother broke off a piece of toast and tapped it against the side of her plate. "She couldn't invite all the girls in one day," she said.

"What of it, anyway?" Virginia said, glaring at Jeanne. "What if she was?"

"And the telephone was right busy yesterday," Mother said quickly, "don't you remember? She may have tried to get us before."

Jeanne raised her eyebrows. "What are you going to wear?" she said.

At that instant one of the Vance children next door began her morning practice. With a loud crash — a bang — the piano broke and began to fall into small jangling pieces. . . . Mother reached over and stroked the palm of her hand. "Never mind — we'll go through the box after we've straightened the house. We'll find something."

II

By ten o'clock, they were in the storeroom — Jeanne swinging her long legs over the top of the trunk — and she and Mother bent low over the packing box that held the best of the old clothes. Mother's back looked crooked and tired, and the gray in her fine, brown hair was like coarse, white basting threads. For a minute Virginia leaned against her. "I just remember, Mother. I could wear that pink dress that Miss Alma gave us!"

"That old thing?" Jeanne said. "I'd rather stay at home any time!" How terribly like a monkey Jeanne looked, hunched in that dark corner — oh, let her wait until she was thirteen and see how it felt!

"I was thinking about a white dress of Mildred's, that her mother gave us last winter," Mother said, turning things over with quick, jerking movements of her wrists. "I thought maybe — watch out for a white dress, Virginia."

Though the idea of wearing Mildred's dress sent a queer little shiver up her spine, she began to watch out for it. The box was jammed to the top with scraps and old clothes different people had given them. There was a crushed black velvet, pieces of yellowed lace, net guimpes and embroidered corset covers, two white ostrich tips Mother had had when she was young, matted brown and gray woolens — all smelling oddly of mice and camphor balls. "Ah — here it is!" Mother cried, holding a misty white dress to the light and squinting her eyes. "Yes, this will do — this will be lovely. Look at the lace, Virginia — it's very handsome."

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The dress was made of marquisette. There was shadow lace let in the skirt, and the pattern in it was picked out with coral. Virginia lifted one end of it and examined it closely, to see whether the coral was silk or beads. It was silk. "Oh, Mother! I didn't remember it was like this!"

Mother smoothed the skirt. "It looks a lot more like you than Mildred Tatum!" she said.

Again she felt that silly little twinge and she said, in spite of herself, "Do you think she ever wore it here?"

"I don't think so, honey. She had it at Virginia Beach last summer. Stand still a minute. . . ."

"I guess people will all wonder where Ginny got it," Jeanne said.

"Mother, *please* make Jeanne go out."

"Now, Jeanne. Take a bucket and see if there are any ripe figs this morning," Mother said, as though she were very tired.

"I was going, anyway." The door slammed after her.

Shadows from the fig tree just outside the window lay like purple bruises across Mother's face and hands. . . . If she turned her head and looked, there were the dust marks where Father's sample cases had stood — the long, narrow shoe case, the thick, square one that held trays of beautiful ties, and the tiny, thin satchel with chocolate and marshmallow cakes pasted all over the inside. As far back as she could remember, Father had come home with different sample cases. But the only bag he carried very long was his own Gladstone, and that had left no mark in the dust, for it had stood under the bed in Mother's room whenever he was at home. . . . She looked up at Mother. All through the house there was a sudden whispering, strange and frightening, and she could not understand the meaning of it. . . . *Mother!*

But Mother, apparently, had felt nothing; she was absorbed in the dress. "Now I tell you," she sighed, "we'll just try this on and see how much it has to be taken up."

And soon — in no time at all — they were both at work, getting things ready for the party. It was not only the dress, which proved to be almost big enough for Mother and had to be shortened three times before it was the right length. But the darned places in the heels of her Sunday socks had grown simply enormous. She had to go downtown to Steinberg's that afternoon and get some new socks. Fifty cents, that meant! Well, it wasn't as if Jeanne and Andy were actually hungry — their time would come.

Before she dressed, she called up Mildred. "Hello — is this you, Mildred? Look — this is Ginny. Ginny. Virginia Bruce."

"Oh — hello, Virginia." Mildred's voice sounded far away.

"Mildred, look — are you going to town this afternoon?"

"I don't think so. I think I'm going driving with some girls."

"Oh." She traced an outline of the telephone with her finger. "Well, I just have to go downtown and get some socks for the party. . . ."

"Party? You mean Frances Bradford's party?"

"Yes. I'm invited." Her heart was bumping from side to side. "I thought maybe. . . ."

"Well! Well, I guess I'll see you to-morrow, then."

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"What time are you going, Mildred?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'm going with Mary Scanlon, I think."

"Oh. Well. . . . Good-bye."

She turned slowly from the wall, certain that she heard something laughing. But no, the house was still, except for the whirring of the sewing machine. . . .

III

On the way home from town, she stopped by the post office and asked if there was any mail for them. Of course there wasn't. Whatever made her keep on sneaking in here, leaning far into the window so nobody would hear her ask? They hadn't had a letter from Father since the divorce. But, just in case one came, she would like to be the one to take it home. . . . Mr. Charles was coming in through the opposite door. He stopped when he saw her. "Well, well — Virginia! I haven't see you in a long time. Still going to school?"

"Oh, yes sir."

He looked at her oddly. "Um. Taking shorthand and typewriting?"

"Not yet, Mr. Charles. But I am going to next year."

"That's fine. Heard anything from that father of yours lately?"

She felt her neck and cheeks redden. "No, sir."

"Well . . . let me know," he mumbled. He lifted his hat and trotted away.

Walking down the post-office steps she faced Judge Tanner's office in the courthouse, where Mother had got her divorce a year ago. She could see right through the walls . . . the thick, yellowish light in the room, the long ink-stained table — even the brass cuspidor, which smelled horridly of cigar butts. Mr. Charles had stood with many onionskin papers held tightly in his little, swollen hands, reading so fast that the corners of his mouth had grown wet and bubbly, and Judge Tanner had almost gone to sleep in his chair. A fly had crawled to the top of his head, rubbing its tiny, black legs over its wings, as though it were cold on that big, round ball and didn't know which way to turn. It had made a thin, whining noise — she would never forget that lonely sound. . . . But the divorce was soon over. "I hope you have better luck next time," Judge Tanner had said, shaking Mother's hand, "a real man, and not a fly-by-night!"

Crossing the street to the shady side, she pulled at the tight elastic under her chin, moving it up a little higher. The sun hurt her eyes; she blinked them hard. . . . "Hello, Virginia."

"Hello, Mabel." Mabel Vinson, who had already left school and helped her mother in the cafeteria. She walked as though her shoes hurt her. Maybe she ought to stop a minute. . . . But no; it was too late; Mabel had already limped past.

It was white — a dizzy white — in the sun, but if you were careful you might walk in the deep, cool shade all the way. She was lucky, too, for, just as she came to the hottest stretch, Miss Ferris drove along and picked her up. "What are you doing out this time of day, child?" she asked, without turning her head the smallest part of an inch from the dusty road.

Virginia lifted the package with the socks folded inside. "I had to do a little shopping," she said. "I had to buy some socks for a party." With the word, "party," something exciting caught her up and gave her a spin. This time to-morrow, what would she be doing? She saw herself, surrounded by girls. . . . "Will you be my partner, Ginny? . . . Ginny, come and sit by me. . . . Oh, I never saw you look so pretty. . . ." She blushed, pressed the socks tight, and heard herself saying, "Frances Bradford's party. I'm invited."

"Oh!" said Miss Ferris, curiously. She guided the car very slowly around a wide curve. "Your mother sews for Mrs. Bradford, doesn't she, Virginia?"

"Yes'm. Turn here, Miss Ferris."

They drew up in front of the house. She thanked Miss Ferris and slid out of the car. The house looked small and black in the bright sun, and the grass needed cutting. "Won't you come in?"

"Not to-day, thank you. I hope we see you at Sunday School this Sunday. We want as many as we can get. Bring your friends. There ought to be a lot of children out here in this neighborhood, aren't there?"

She trailed up the walk and into the house. It was silly of her, but with Jeanne sitting cross-legged on the bed, cutting out paper dolls, she sneaked the socks back of some things on the

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chair. "Where's Mother?" she asked in an icy voice.

"Out in the kitchen, I guess, ironing your dress — or Mildred's — whichever you want to call it."

She stamped her foot. "Pick up that mess," she cried, "papers and books and scissors — you ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"Shut up," Jeanne said calmly.

But already she had forgotten her anger. For, as she looked into the mirror, she saw a most charming young girl, her cheeks brightly flushed, wearing a white dress embroidered in coral. . . . Oh! Oh! The thin, blue vein in her throat beat fast — to-morrow afternoon! Probably she would be playing some kind of exciting game. She and Mildred might even be partners! Would there be boys? Her heart skipped a beat. Oh, she did hope there wouldn't be boys, they made her so shy and uncomfortable. Still. . . . She raised up on her toes, straining all the muscles in her legs; she spun quickly, dropped . . . bang! There — she had stumbled over the dressmaker's form, knocking it against the bed. Straightening it, she refused to look at Jeanne and walked with dignity out of the room.

Even at supper she tasted the party. Every bite of grits was flavored with vanilla, the bread was angel-food cake iced with caramel. She felt positively greedy, thinking how to-morrow night at this time she probably wouldn't be able to eat a bite of food; she would simply *toy* with her food. . . . Mrs. Bradford, they said, ordered her refreshments from Birmingham!

IV

By two o'clock the next afternoon she was dressed and ready to go. And never had she looked so nice. The dress was *darling*. Her shoes were polished white as snow, and the new socks clung snugly to her long, straight legs. Mother kept fussing over her, giving the neck of her dress firm, little yanks, straightening the skirt, fluffing out the sleeves. "Nobody would ever guess it wasn't made for you," she said.

What about the coral embroidery on the lace? How could anybody forget it, if once he had seen it? The thought of it made her hot all over. It was the first time she had worn another *girl's* dress. Still, it was changed, it was all made over — not a bit the same. Suddenly, she hugged Mother close and hard. "Look — it's two-twenty — don't you think I could go now?"

"Well — I guess so," Mother said, rubbing her hand across her face. "It will take you about fifteen minutes to get there."

All along the street women sat on their porches, slapping at mosquitoes. Now, as she walked daintily along, she felt them peering through the vines. She held her red silk parasol low over her head. If she walked slowly, maybe she'd meet Mildred and Mary Scanlon, and they could all go to the party together. It was hard not to walk too fast, but anyway she didn't want to be the first one there. She twirled the parasol over her shoulder until the sharp bones ached. Then she set the tip of it in the green moss between the bricks of the sidewalk, spinning it violently. The few clouds in the sky looked like beaten egg whites sifted thickly with sugar, and the trees nodded to her, trembling faintly, as though they understood about the party.

At Twenty-third Avenue, Mildred passed her, driving in the car with Mrs. Haskell and three other girls. They all looked at her and then drove on, laughing and talking. . . . Well, it was too crowded in that car for her. And really, she didn't mind. It was as though she heard Mother's voice now — "There wasn't room, there wasn't room. . . ." She unfolded her handkerchief and rubbed the perspiration from the palms of her hands. Gee, it was hot!

V

The Bradfords had a beautiful house, big and gray, set far back on a velvety sweep of lawn. The porch was furnished like a living room, with soft, yellow lamps and little, round iron tables, painted orange. There were tally cards on all the tables — a pretty girl swinging a bird cage, with a real feather bird stuck on it and green silk cords hanging over the edges of the table. Electric ceiling fans blew their tassels about and lifted the corners of the cards. Mildred and Louise Smalley were sitting in one of the swings. They smiled at her. "Hello, Virginia."

"Hello." She stood fumbling with the parasol, the blood pounding in her hot cheeks. Oh, why had she brought the clumsy old thing?

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"Here, let me help you, dear." Mrs. Bradford took the parasol and gave her a little tap on the shoulder. "I'll just stand it here in the corner. You know most of the girls, don't you?"

More girls were crowding up the steps. She hesitated and then went over to the swing, where Mildred lolled back, talking to Louise. They made room for her, and she sat down, slipping her hand through Mildred's arm. Mildred went on talking. "So we're going down to St. Simon's Island the last of the month," she said. "I don't care much about it, but Mother thinks I need a change."

"It's more fun at the Pass," Helen said. "I just love it down there."

"But I'm so *tired* of the Gulf Coast," Mildred said. "Why don't you get your mother to let you go with us? Gee, we could have more *fun!*"

"Well, I don't know — maybe."

Mildred was the prettiest of them all. Gold hair and skin like — like honey! And her fingernails — shining, pointed, pink as roses! Virginia looked down at her own stumpy nails, and she could have died of shame. . . .

"Virginia Bruce, I haven't seen you in perfect ages!"

Startled, she looked up. Mildred was talking to her — but she was looking at the dress! And what did she mean — perfect ages? When only Thursday. . . . "I saw you coming down here," she said in a small voice.

Mildred pressed Louise's arm, and they both giggled. Now the porch was filled with girls she knew at school, most of them in her classes, but bigger, not so — so childish! There must be twenty-five or thirty of them, all laughing and talking. "Listen, honey — I thought I'd just die the other afternoon —"

"You mean at Thelma's party?"

"No, at Jane's. Honestly. . . ."

"Did you ever *taste* such salad?"

How strange to see Thelma in the blue organdie dress Mother had made for her — to feel so *close* to the dress, as though it were an old friend. . . . She took her arm away from Mildred's and swallowed so hard that she almost jumped. Suddenly, Pete Thayer smiled at her. "Gee, that's a cute dress, Virginia."

"Oh, it certainly is!" Thelma said. "Did your mother make that dress?"

She smoothed the skirt. "Thank you, I'm glad you like it." She picked up a tally card, and held it close to her face. . . . The girl was lovely. She had on a pink hat tied under her chin with long, blue streamers. She stood almost on tiptoe, with her skirt blown back and the bird cage held high. . . .

"*Did* your mother make it, Virginia?"

Oh, why didn't Mildred say *something?* She stole a quick glance. Mildred's eyes and mouth were strangely lowered. . . . "Do you really like it?" Virginia said faintly. And now the girl on the tally card grinned, a wide hideous grin. . . .

"The lace is so pretty," Pete said. "Are those beads?"

She tweaked the hem of the dress with trembling fingers. "No, it's embroidery," she said, and it was nothing more than a whisper. *Mildred!*

"I'm going to get her to make me one like it," Thelma said. "You wouldn't care, would you, Virginia?"

When she said that, the young girl in the pink hat laughed right out loud! Virginia took a deep breath. "It was Mildred's dress," she heard herself saying, in a high, squeaky voice. "She gave it to me."

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For a minute, nobody spoke. Then Mrs. Bradford stepped out on the porch. "Are you all here, girls? We're going to play hearts — you all know how to play hearts, don't you? Find your tallies."

Tallies? She looked down. The girl in the pink hat was crushed beyond recognition! She began to rub hard, trying to smooth her out. Writing on the other side . . . red ink. . . . Oh, thank . . . thank . . . *God* — it was her own name! Virginia Bruce. She stroked it frantically, small, yellow feathers fluttering down from the bird. . . .

Though there was ice cream, frozen in the shape of a tiny bird and set upon a nest of green spun sugar, spiced almonds, even individual cakes thick with marsh-mallow frosting and decorated with candied violets, she wasn't a bit hungry. When she ate the little, darling bird, it lay cold and heavy on her stomach. And the cake — it seemed such a pity to leave the cake untouched. She broke off a tiny piece of it. Rich and sweet and filled with smooth, yellow cream, it melted on her tongue. But it was hard to swallow. She left most of it standing on her plate.

She was the first to leave. When she had thanked Frances and Mrs. Bradford, she hurried down the steps, the umbrella tapping with a hollow sound — thump — thump — thump! At the bottom step, Mildred called out to her: "If you'll wait a few minutes, Virginia, some of us will be glad to drive you part of the way home."

She turned. She would not look at Mildred, she couldn't. "I have to hurry home. I'm sorry."

Away she rushed, pretending that it was true. Darkest gloom descended on her with every step she took. She talked to herself, babbling wildly under her breath: "Hate . . . hate . . . and I'll never again . . . another single . . . hate . . . I'm going to tell Mother. . . ." But, at the thought of Mother, such a terrible pain struck her chest that she almost dropped her parasol!

VI

JEANNE was setting the table for supper, when she reached home. She stared curiously. "Is the party over?"

"Of course it's over. I'm home, for pity's sake."

"Was it a lot of fun, Ginny?"

"I'll tell you at supper," she said, sliding through the bedroom door. She laid the parasol across the chair and pulled off the dress. Without looking at it, she lifted it by one sleeve and threw it on the bed. . . .

When she went into the kitchen, Mother was putting the grits into bowls. She raised up quickly and searched Virginia's face. "Well? Did you have a nice time?"

She managed a brilliant smile. "Oh, it was a lovely party!"

"Did anybody say anything about your dress?"

"Yes'm. They were all crazy about it."

"Here, will you help me get the things on? You take the bread."

Presently they were all sitting around the supper table, eating scorched grits and figs and bread and butter. "Tell us about it, Ginny," Jeanne said humbly. "Was it a very big party?"

"I want to hear about the eats," Andy said. "Tell us what you had for refreshments, Ginny." Andy's face was glazed with soap, and there were faint, blue shadows beneath his eyes. "Did you have ice cream, Ginny?"

"Yes, there was ice cream."

"What kind? Chocolate?"

"It was a little. . . ."

But just as she was going to say, "bird," the frozen, little thing flew right up into her throat and began to beat its wings!

In early issues:
Short stories
by John Gallishaw and Koni Fine

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THE WORLD AS I WANT IT

BY UPTON SINCLAIR

YES, I CAN TELL Mr. MacLeish and the Editor of THE FORUM exactly the kind of world which I desire to bring about. I have been thinking and writing about that problem for something over thirty years and I have many times drafted the blue print of the new society I desire.

I can say it in one sentence: I desire a world from which exploitation of man by man has been abolished and in which it is impossible for a man to consume wealth without having produced an equivalent amount of wealth. From this it follows, of course, that in this world it will be impossible for a man to produce wealth and fail to receive its equivalent in the form of purchasing power.

I admit that there are many other evils in our human society. There is much knowledge we have to get and there are many problems we have to solve. We have to find out what causes cancer, heart failure, old age, and so on. We have to stop breeding mental defectives. It would help us to find out where we came from in this universe and whither we are going. But we cannot really work at any of the other problems until we have abolished exploitation of man by man and exploitation of classes, groups, and races of men by other classes, groups, and races.

Our present system of organized exploitation is the cause of poverty, crime, prostitution, and mass ignorance, of militarism and wars, both international and civil. It makes the gaining of new knowledge very difficult and it makes the application of our present knowledge impossible. We know, for example, how to prevent tuberculosis and all the diseases of malnutrition but we cannot do it because we keep the masses of our people in slums and we pay them so little that they can buy only starches and lard.

For thirty years I have been preaching social justice and explaining exactly what I mean thereby — a society in which the production and distribution of wealth is a social function and in which every producer is guaranteed the equivalent of the full value of his labor. I have been told that this was Utopian and a problem for some far-off generation. I have answered with the statement that the present system was one which would eliminate itself; that it contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction and would break down in my lifetime.

That prophecy has now come true, and in the emergency I have decided to set aside my hopes and ambitions as a writer and devote myself to the practical task of showing that a co-operative society can be established and can be made to work. I have announced myself as candidate for governor of California upon the program, "End Poverty in California." As it happens, we now have more than a million persons in our state dependent upon charity for their existence. The task of supporting them has driven the state to the verge of bankruptcy, and I am proposing to the people of California that they should take this million persons off the backs of the taxpayers and make them self-supporting, by giving them access to land and machinery — the best land and the best machinery — and permitting them not merely to produce goods but to consume the goods which they have produced: something which is no longer permitted to the producers under our present system of production for the benefit of private owners.

The voters of California are responding to that proposition in a way which indicates that the attempt is going to be made. In that case, I will show you the kind of world which I want in action; and you must admit that this will be much more satisfactory than telling you about it in words.

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A CALENDAR OF CONTROVERSY

September, 1934

CAPITAL VS. LABOR

Verdun or Serajevo?

WHEN TANKS rumble in the streets, soldiers build barricades, citizens are shot, then a controversy may be said to have reached first-class proportions. Nowhere in the United States was there a struggle more befitting this category than last month's round between capital and labor. With a winter and spring of defeat behind him, the workingman rolled up his sleeves and aimed a haymaker at his employers.

San Francisco, Minneapolis, Portland, Seattle, Houston, the State of Alabama were all erupting. Chief cause of the trouble was the by-now-platitudinous section 7-a. American employers cannot make up their minds whether or not they are going to permit collective bargaining. A good many employees decided to make it up for them. The result in San Francisco was the first American general strike since 1919, with all the trimmings from General Johnson down to vigilantes. The conservative press called it civil war, placed the blame squarely on the strikers. Mild William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, piously washed his hands of the whole affair. The cause of the strike was forgotten in the shock of the effect. It collapsed, and with it went the general-strike movements in Portland, Seattle, and Minneapolis. Again labor conceded its point. Capital agreed to arbitrate. But wise labor observers considered the fight just begun, to end no one knows exactly where.

DECISION: *Against the lid that somehow will not stay on the labor pot.*

LEGAL SYSTEM VS. DILLINGER

Bull's-eye

"TO ALL PRECINCTS and detectives — cancel the following 1934 alarms — No. 3,342 (John Dillinger) . . . Dillinger shot and killed. Cancellation complete." Thus the New York Police Department announced the end of Public Enemy Number 1. Who killed John Dillinger or who was actually responsible for the death trap is obscured in U. S. Department of Justice taciturnity, police-department grumbling, and newspaper surmise. Federal agents Melvin Purvis and Samuel P. Cowley were given official credit for the round-up in the form of promotions. Sergeant Zarkovich of the East Chicago Police Department and Mrs. Anna Sage, the "girl in red," were runners up for the honor. Federal authorities insisted that the local police had little to do with the capture. The police were equally insistent that they did the real groundwork and that Mr. Purvis and his agents merely came in at the kill. London papers, although rejoicing at Dillinger's death, pointed out that such ways of "catching" criminals reflected the inadequacy of the American legal system. One thing was clear. That legal system had won, and Dillinger was no more than a collection of bloodstained relics salvaged by morbid promoters.

DECISION: *To the United States Department of Justice, Division of Investigation, which has caught fifteen of the Dillinger gang, has four more to go.*

AMERICAN ART VS. POLISH PORTRAITS

International Incident

WHEN THE Whitney Museum of American Art's Director, Mrs. Juliana R. Force, turned down the offer of William Randolph Hearst to pay the costs of shipping the Whitney collection to the 19th Biennial Arts Exhibition in Venice, if Marion Davies' portrait by the Polish artist, Styka, could be included in the group, she meant it. Count Volpi di Misurata, Exhibition

President, however, saw no reason why Miss Davies should not hang in the vestibule of the American Pavilion. He did not think it strange that the work of a Polish artist should be so prominently displayed in a U. S. collection. Mrs. Force did. When she came upon the Davies portrait she declared that the entire Whitney collection of 101 pictures would be packed up, lock, stock, and barrel, to be sent home, unless Miss Davies was removed.

Count Volpi was diplomatically in Brussels. The Secretary of the Exhibition promptly entrained for Vienna, from which safe distance he remarked of Mr. Styka's picture, "It's no worse than some of the other American exhibits." Someone tacked a card under the picture stating that it was not to be considered a part of the American Exhibit.

Mrs. Force was not to be bought off by such academic subterfuges. The Whitney group continued packing until the obnoxious Miss Davies was removed.

DECISION: *To Mrs. Force, with whom such magnificent figures as publishers and cinema actresses cut no ice.*

GOVERNOR VS. GOVERNOR

Two's a Crowd

SENATOR Huey Long, whose Louisiana State Senate celebrated the Fourth of July by shooting off firecrackers under one another's noses in the Chamber, has long been the leading attraction in the United States legislative side show. But the highly involved question of just who is Governor of North Dakota last month quite obscured the antics of the Kingfish.

Governor William Langer was convicted of felony on charges of "shaking down" everybody from state employees to college professors to keep up his paper and maintain his political dominance in the state. Secretary of Interior Ickes made investigations, allegedly at the behest of U. S. Senator Nye, that brought the conviction.

The first signs of trouble at Bismarck came when Langer ordered out the militia to keep Lieutenant Governor Olson from assuming the governorship that had been assigned to him by the courts. Thereupon Governor Olson ordered out the militia too, and for a while it was nip and tuck while North Dakota drifted along practically governorless. To complicate matters further,

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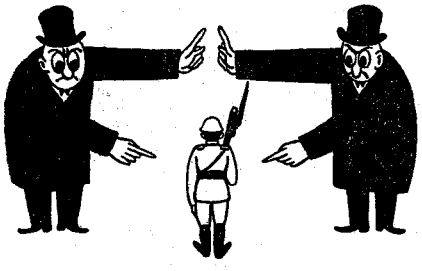
Langer was renominated for office by a 75,000 plurality during his trial.

With Olson finally in the gubernatorial chair, the North Dakota House of Representatives, under the orders of Langer, assembled to impeach Langer, in the hope of thus being able to clear him of the charges for which he lost his office. Langer himself remained more or less in hiding, entrusting most of his public relations to Mrs. Langer, who has prom-



ised to run in her husband's stead, should he be sent to jail. Partisans of both sides gathered in large groups to shout derision at one another. With characteristic racial calm, Governor Olson characterized the whole affair as "just kid's play."

DECISION: *To North Dakota for creating United States' Number 1 political freak.*

SECOND GENERATION VS. THE OLD ORDER

"Dogs in the Manger"

MAYOR FRANK HAGUE of Jersey City says that labor conditions are ideal in his town. Therefore there is no need for picketing. Employees of the Miller Parlor Furniture Company have different ideas about labor conditions in Jersey City's notorious sweatshop districts.

When strikers attempted to picket the plant, judges clapped an injunction on them, sent them, along with a few newspaper men who were covering the strike, off to jail. "Dogs in a manger," one Justice growled. Two "dogs" happened to be Corliss Lamont, son of Morgan Partner Thomas Lamont, and Alfred Bingham, son of ex-Senator Hiram Bingham. With the aid of excellent publicity, the American Civil Liberties Union and allied forces got the anti-picketing injunction voided. A new one, however, appeared inevitable.

DECISION: *Apparently for the Miller Parlor Furniture Company.*

CHURCH VS. STATE

"Let no man put asunder"

WHEN MRS. CURTIS DALL went to Reno ostensibly to get a divorce, Dr. Charles Fiske, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Central New York, wrote to *The Living Church:* "Since no one else has said it publicly, and since it seems to many of us that it needs to be said, let me give brief expression to our sense of shame and humiliation that in the family of our Chief Executive there should be recorded two Reno divorces, with one 'remarriage' and another in the offing in a year. So little sense of the moral responsibilities of high position . . . seems to us to be a family disgrace, a disgrace to the nation, a disgrace to the church, of which the family are members, and in which they are occasionally worshippers."

Some prelates and laymen agreed with Bishop Fiske. Others did not. The elder Roosevelts, burdened with the task of hauling 120,000,000 people out of a depression, said nothing.

DECISION: *To the senior Roosevelts, who permit their adult offspring to live their lives as they see fit.*

POETRY VS. PLAGIARISM

Poetic License

ALFRED KREYMBORG is a poet. James (Schnozzle) Durante is a comedian, who, upon occasion, broadcasts over the radio. Last month Comedian

Durante read some of poet Kreymborg's verses to his radio audience. Unfortunately he neglected to reveal their authorship. He also did not think the poems worth cash payment.

Irate Mr. Kreymborg promptly brought suit for plagiarism. Not he alone was amazed when United States District Court Judge Patterson dismissed the case, declaring: "Under the copyrights act, protection against public performance or delivery of copyright works is afforded only in the case of lecture, sermon, address, or similar production, drama or musical composition; and other copyrighted works may be recited in public for profit without infringement."

To poet Kreymborg this was hardly poetic justice. He had the case appealed.

DECISION: *Durante, by a nose.*

PITTSBURGH UNIVERSITY VS. ITSELF

Liberal Arts

CHANCELLOR John C. Bowman of the University of Pittsburgh announced that Dr. Ralph E. Turner, Professor of History and a prominent liberal economist, was no longer of service to the university. At once the cry went up that the hand of Mellon had reached out to strangle academic freedom. Students and faculty signed petitions demanding the reinstatement of Dr. Turner. They said he had been turned out because he had fought against sweatshops, for old-age pensions and similar social legislation. Chancellor Bowman had no good reason to offer for his action.

The rumpus soon reached the sharp ears of Governor Pinchot, no friend of the Mellons. Pittsburgh University, never noted for its liberalism, is supported to some extent by the Mellon family but chiefly by state funds. Governor Pinchot threatened to cut the appropriation if Dr. Turner was not reinstated or a good reason shown for his dismissal. The Chancellor waited for some higher inspiration while student liberals continued to fume.

DECISION: *None.*

MICROBES VS. THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK CITY

The Power of the Press

EVERY SUMMER certain New York City newspapers go through a special ceremony. They have private chemists analyze the water of the city's many bathing beaches. Every year they find that water generally unfit for human swimmers. The city officials thereupon rush out and make more tests that prove, to the contrary, that the water is quite pure.

This summer New York's barrel-chested, leather-lunged Mayor La-Guardia bellowed that the allegations of the newspapers were untrue. To prove his point he called the owner of the *New York Post* a few names that had to be indicated in print by dashes. The papers, roared Mr. LaGuardia, merely want to shout about something. Editors pointed out that the city officials whitewash the condition of the water because

of the political influence of the owners of property at the bathing beaches.

DECISION: *To the hardy citizens of New York, who apparently can swim with impunity in water that kills the stoutest fish.*

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Courtesy of the Ferargil Galleries

Pandanus Grove

HAWAIIAN SCENES

Three Lithographs

BY A. S. MACLEOD

"These islands — born of the night, sired by the sun, cradled in the sea, with the moon for a god-mother."

DON BLANDING

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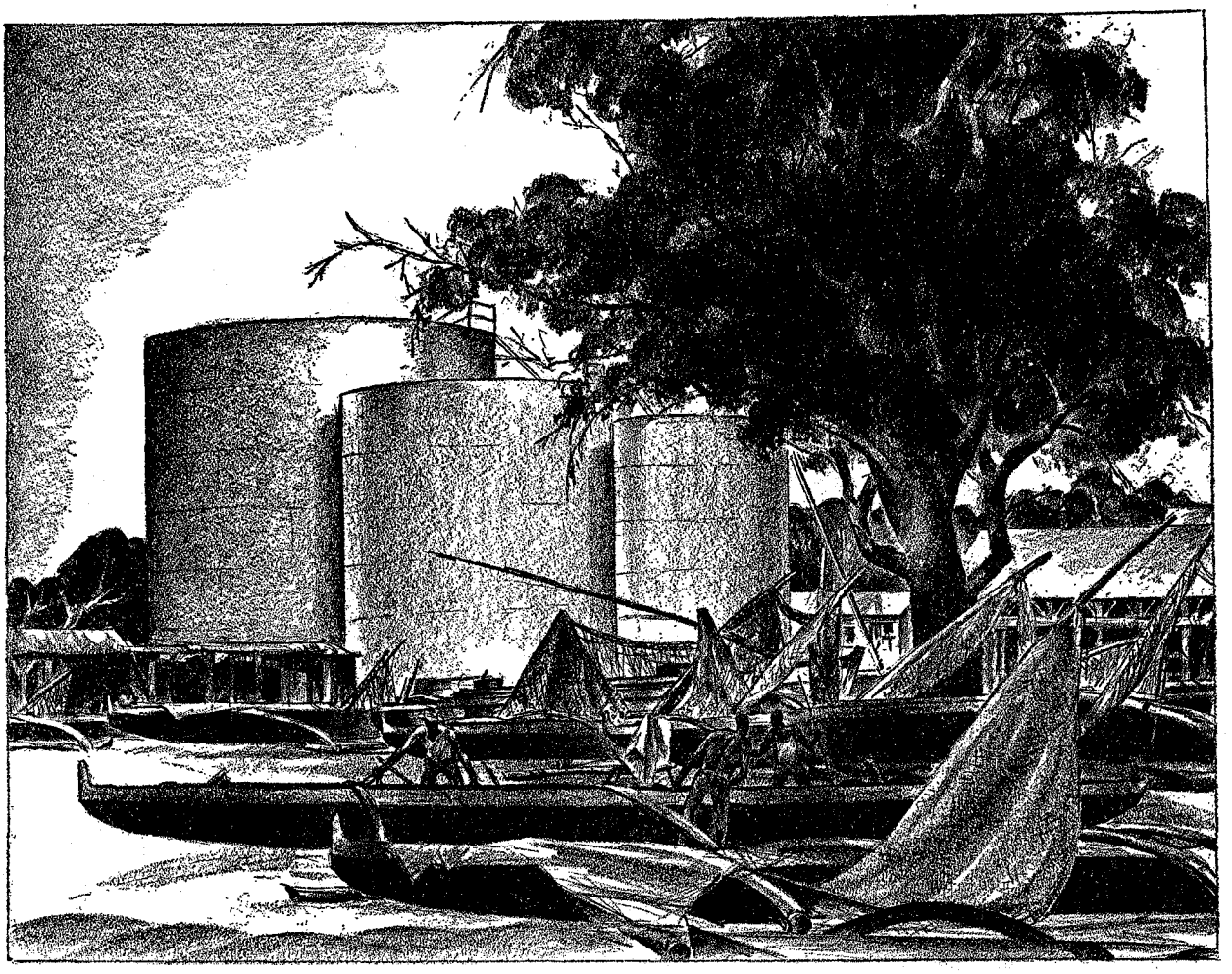

Outrigger Beach — Kailua

Throw-net Fisherman

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WHERE CONSUMERS PRODUCE

The Editor Reflects on the Happy State of Sweden

MR. LEWIS A. RILEY, of New Mexico, wrote a new and convincing chapter of economic philosophy into the August FORUM in his article, "Masters of Use — *The Hope of Consumers.*" Mr. Riley indicated that not even the New Deal will get us very far on the road to Utopia. The New Deal envisages jobs for everybody and a sane balance between industry and labor, but it does not really come to grips with the third party to the economic triangle — the Forgotten Consumer.

By readers of Mr. Riley's article I have been asked about Sweden and to state what consumers are doing there through the co-operative movement. In that country, since the World War, consumers have in several industries built their own factories and taken over the business of producing as well as consuming. Forty per cent of the turnover of trade within Sweden is in the hands of co-operatives, and one family out of every three belongs to a consumer co-operative society.

The Swedes welcome whatever works. To many of them state ownership is anathema; yet for generations their government has successfully operated main lines of railroads. Other railroads, however, have been run very well under private management. And the same is true of electric-power stations. Government power and private power can be purchased in the same province.

This situation is paralleled in private and co-operative industry. Many capitalists whom tourists meet in Sweden become very gloomy at mention of the consumer co-operatives. Yet the co-operative societies, despite their success, have not put private business for profit out of the picture. For the consumer factories, by and large, are for members' use only; they do not heap up surpluses and undersell to the general public nor do they sell their products abroad. The manufacture of goods for foreign markets is still in the hands of private capital and enterprising industrialists. Thus in happy Sweden we find a triple set-up of business: part conducted by the state, part by private capital, and part by co-operative societies.

The Swedish co-operative societies stand ready to push in and camp on the preserves of private capital whenever abnormalities appear in the price structure. The co-operative movement has not created a revolution in Sweden, but it has acted as a sort of stabilizer.

Such organizations are so little known in America that it is well to remind ourselves how they differ from private business. They are membership organizations open to all comers. Their capital is supplied by members and is restricted. They operate in general on a cash basis, and are thus relieved of all the imponderable problems of credit. They work with an eye not on profits but on the well-being of the homes of their members. A generous portion of their surplus is spent on education or research. Whereas in stock companies one votes the number of his shares, in co-operative societies each member has an equal vote, regardless of his financial stake. In consumer co-operatives, goods are sold to members at the lowest price compatible with quality, and a surplus or profit or rebate is periodically distributed to members, like a dividend, in proportion to the amount of each member's purchases.

THE CONSUMERS' UNION

THE SWEDISH Co-operative Union celebrates this year its thirty-fifth congress. The Union was formed in 1899 to act, among other

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things, as a wholesaler for the local co-operative consumer associations. For the first five years, however, it merely dug in by studying markets, educating the public, and teaching would-be co-operators how to behave. In 1904 the Union began to buy and sell at wholesale. It was again another five years before it started production on its own by breaking the European margarine monopoly with a co-operative factory. In the course of time the number of local associations enjoying membership in the Union has tended to diminish, whereas the personal memberships in the affiliated societies and the annual turnover of goods have both expanded steadily at the rate of ten per cent *per annum*. This tendency toward larger memberships and a smaller number of units is proof of the growing enlightenment and responsibility of the masses.

In Sweden the success of the co-operative movement has been due in large part to the quality of leadership as well as the intelligence and loyalty of members. The outstanding figure is Mr. Albin Johansson, Managing Director of the Co-operative Union, the central organization of the consumer co-operatives. Mr. Johansson's salary is well under $6,000. Such a salary would be a scandal in some American corporations, where the services of a man of his caliber would be rated at anything between $100,000 and $1,000,000 annually. One of the slurs cast on the Co-operative Union by Swedish capitalists is that its success is due to the business acumen of this man who gives his services for a pittance. Apparently Albin Johansson has his own ideas about rewards, apart from his salary, through the satisfactions of service and the respect of the community.

In 1933 the Co-operative Union embraced 747 consumer societies scattered over the map of Sweden. During the depression, from 1929 to 1932, the membership in these societies increased from 422,000 to 534,000 in a total population of six millions — in terms of families, one out of every three households in the country. The annual turnover of the consumer societies increased from $38,000,000 in 1918 to $91,000,000 in 1933.

The basic capital of these consumer societies consists of membership dues, which amount to about $25 a head for life. This sum need not be paid in at once — membership can be automatic with the first purchase — but is accumulated and earmarked at the rate of three per cent on purchases. Once the $25 is accumulated, the member is entitled to draw out rebates at stated times at the rate of three per cent of his purchases — a correspondence with the dividends of private companies. He may, however, choose to deposit his rebates in the savings funds or insurance bureaus the co-operatives run.

The largest of the consumer societies is the Consumers' Co-operative Society of Stockholm, with a membership on January 1, 1934, of 72,629. The Stockholm society maintains 340 retail shops for the sale of clothing, provisions, and household articles, each with the attractive trade legend **konsum** blazoned across its portals. A recent house-to-house canvass of the prices paid by housewives at the **konsum** shops, compared with non-co-operative prices, revealed a saving of 5.2 per cent on purchases. Add the three-per-cent refund, and it is eight per cent cheaper to buy the same quality of articles at the **konsum**.

Scattered over every part of Sweden are 3,900 of these **konsum** shops for household supplies. They are light, polite, expeditious. They are as smart as *The New Yorker* or the Rockefeller Center. They are modern in architecture and color and interior decoration. In America you must go to the Century of Progress to find anything as gay as these Swedish shops that sell at cost. They sparkle with reds and blues and yellows and stainless steel and prism glass and ruddy, straw-haired salesgirls; they are shimmering and chic and *Suedoise*.

Consumer Factories

In 1909 the Co-operative Union set up its margarine factory and began to engage in production. In other words, the consumer began to produce, to produce his own goods for his own use: the amount of what he wanted at the price he wanted, with no artificial restriction and no overproduction. But the Union

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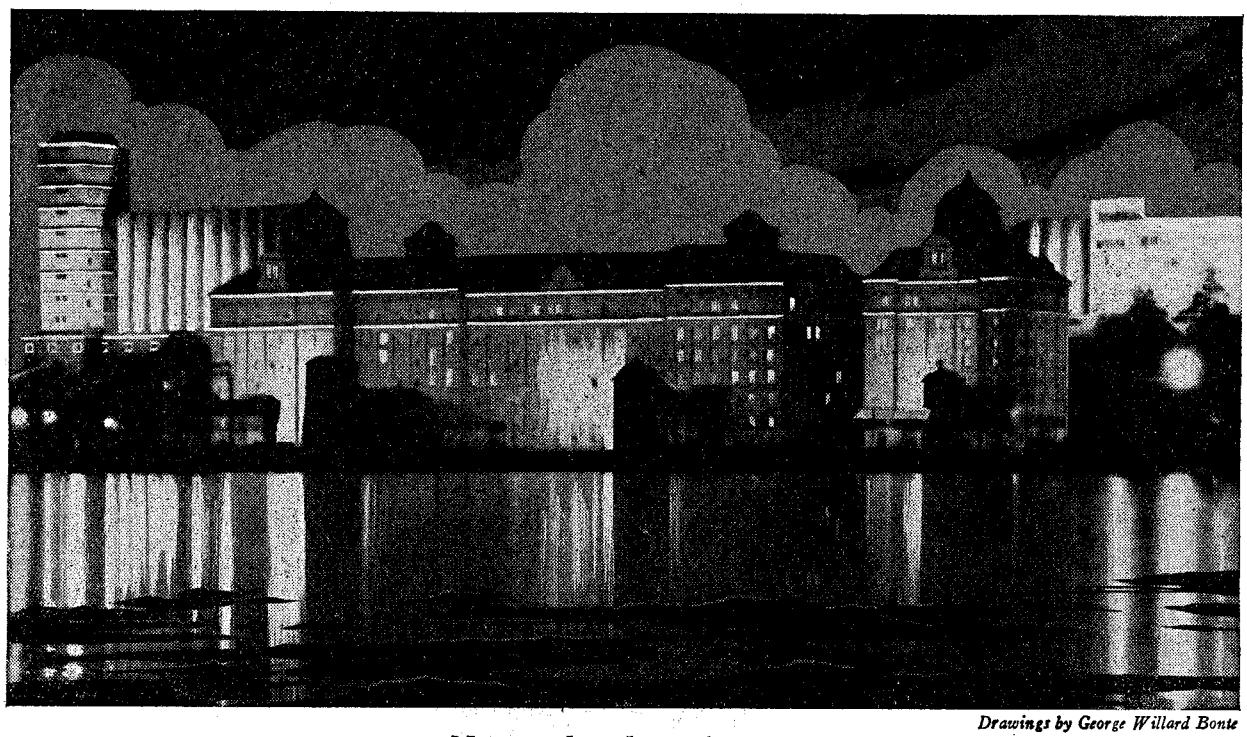

Drawings by George Willard Bonte

Not a palace but a factory

moved into the manufacturing field cautiously. It made no academic dictum that the consumer must learn to produce for the mere joy of production. No, the Swedes are as practical as they are intelligent and technically efficient. The Co-operative Union began to bust monopolies, motivated not by philosophical convictions but by the frequent realization, after careful study, that one trust or another was boosting prices to an unnecessary level. That was found to be the case with flour. So in 1922 the Union started a second factory and went into the business of grinding grain. Bakeries followed. In 1925 the Union bought a shoe factory. In 1927 it challenged the rubber trust and embarked on the manufacture of rubber soles and galoshes — necessities in a northern country of melting snows — and automobile tires.

Another article much needed by the co-operative societies was the cash register. The accounts of the Swedish co-operatives are kept with an exactness and a microscopic analysis of each penny that would give a Connecticut Yankee a headache. Trust prices prevailed in the cash-register industry. (Confidentially, Uncle Sam was suspect.) So in 1932 the Union proceeded to make its own business machines. It also manufactures certain chemicals and roasts coffee more cheaply than private industry — and I never knew a Swede who drank less than ten cups of coffee a day. All told, in 1933, Swedish consumers produced for their own use $20,000,000 worth of manufactured articles.

Electric Bulbs

But the most dramatic triumph of consumer production in Sweden is in electric-light bulbs. These are produced by the Co-operative Luma Union, which began to sell bulbs in 1931. The experts of the Co-operative Union happened to smell something rotten in the price of bulbs and suspected an international monopoly, with ramifications as far away as our own blessed General Electric Company in Schenectady, New York. Prices in different countries were reelingly drunk, ranging all the way from 18 cents in Hungary to 52 cents in England. In 1928, 25-watt bulbs were selling in Sweden for 37 cents, when the Union announced it was going to start a factory and offer bulbs for 22 cents. Of course there was a chorus of anger and derision, and the bulb producers flooded the press with propaganda proving that the idea was not only anti-social but technically impossible. Luck played into the hands of the Union. Unfortunately for private capital, two concerns, in combining, lost a near-genius, an electrical engineer, in

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the shuffle. Luma took him over. He built the Co-ops a model factory, and the sale of bulbs for 22 cents began, as scheduled, early in 1931.

From 1928 to 1930, while the Co-op factory was being constructed, the bulb trust had sat tight, but in 1930, when it saw that Luma really meant business, it began lowering prices. When Luma started operations, the trust price had dropped from 37 to 27 cents. Before the end of 1931, the trust met the Co-op price of 22 cents. In 1932 Luma cut the price to 20 cents, and there a truce was declared. (This morning I priced 25-watt bulbs at the Mazda shop on my corner. They were exactly the Swedish price — 20 cents.) Despite the cries to high heaven in the Swedish bulb business, nobody went bankrupt. The trust was still able to make money at 22 cents instead of 37. Thousands of people found it more convenient to pay two cents more for the trust bulbs than to join a consumer society. Other thousands had a conservative fixation that somehow co-operation is charity or otherwise immoral and would gladly have paid double the price for the same bulb, just for the principle of the thing — and the maintenance of the old order. So the Swedish nation became bulb-conscious. In 1933 Luma sold 2,725,845 bulbs.

The co-operative bulb idea was altogether too bright to be confined to Sweden. Luma became international, and is owned jointly by the co-operative unions of four countries — Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Norway. Some experts maintain that it is in fact the first international consumer co-operative in the history of world economics and a movement of profound significance.

Basic Principles

In 1931 the Swedish Co-operative Union pioneered an untried region — foreign trade. It became part organizer and owner of the Persian Company, with the intention of obtaining oriental goods for co-operative members at reasonable prices. The Persian Company sends rails, cement, tools, and bridge-building material to Persia and brings back rugs, groceries, and leather. Its turnover is already in the millions, although the experiment was accompanied by much misgiving.

Another cause for concern in some quarters is the growing sale of co-operative goods to non-members. This departure from the fundamental principles of the Union is made in certain by-products of manufacture that cannot be assimilated by members alone. However, the Central Committee recommended to the thirty-fifth congress of the Co-operative Union this year a reaffirmation of the old principles of members' household use before other considerations; of restricted capital, no outside loans, no credit; of continued war against monopolistic price-fixing; and of association with the outside public — that is, private business and the state — only when necessitated in the general good.

I have by no means suggested all the ramifications of co-operative economics in Sweden. I have not mentioned the agricultural societies, the 1,500 organizations for the purchase of household electric power, or the housing co-operatives, which shelter in "magic" dwellings 15 per cent of the citizens of Stockholm and build one fourth of the homes of Gothenburg. Forty per cent of the wholesale and retail trade of Sweden is now done by the co-operatives.

In another place I have compared Swedish co-operation to the Rooseveltian New Deal, and on that account have been asked by readers to write this resumé. In many respects, in the sphere of economic regulation, the new American approach and the Swedish consumer activity are similar. In two features, however, Swedish co-operation is unlike our New Deal. The Swedish movement is grounded on self-help. For 35 years Swedish co-operation has fought against government help and subvention as proudly as, on the other hand, it has refused the aid of loans from private capital. Not so with the New Deal. The Swedish Co-operatives believe in a vigorous economic life achieved in independence of government and through open competition with capitalism and credit.

Finally, Swedish co-operation seeks to lower prices. In America we are striving to raise them.

H. G. L.

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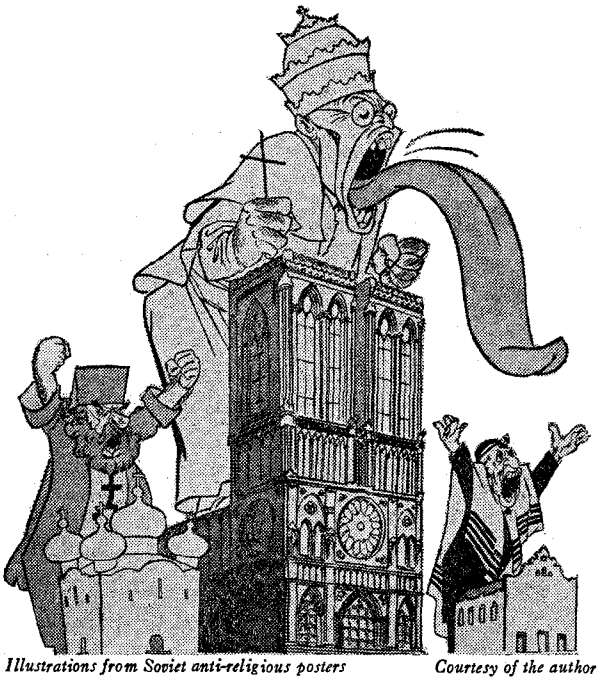
THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE

Atheism in the Soviet Republic

BY WILLIAM M. BARBER



Illustrations from Soviet anti-religious posters *Courtesy of the author*

The high priests of the three faiths, standing in back of their respective churches, spit out anathemas to the communists.

NOWADAYS when a Russian communist is accused of deriving his communism from religion or making a religion out of his communism, it makes his good Russian blood boil. He sees redder than his own red flag. In some ways communism is almost a religion, but religion to a Russian peasant is a totally different thing than it is to you or me. To-day the accepted point of view is that you cannot be a good communist and be religious at the same time.

There are in communism many features which are not inimical to the Christian religion. Communists have striven to throw out the graven images. They punish stealing with a zeal unknown in this country. To speak the truth, to honor thy father and thy mother are parts of their creed. They have striven also to abolish the coveting of thy neighbor's wife or goods. They have elevated the poor in spirit, and those who mourn are now comforted. The meek have inherited Russia, and those who were hungry and thirsty now find themselves on the top layer of the social strata. They have put down the mighty from their seats and exalted those of low degree. They have given the hungry of good things to eat and the rich they have sent empty away. Although murder is punishable by a maximum of only ten years' imprisonment, there is an infinitesimal amount of murder in Russia as compared to our own country. As far as I know there is no lynching. Naturally those commandments and tenets of the Christian faith which refer to the supernaturalism of the divine spirit cannot be dovetailed into their social system. But anyone will admit that some of the good features of the Christian religion — which many Christians ignore — hold prominent place in the communist program of to-day.

Millions of good, honest, law-abiding Americans are as irreligious as the most ardent communists. Yet we make no quarrel with them. How many Americans, even among the pillars of the Church, practice the Ten Commandments and live up to the spirit of the Beatitudes? How many understand and abide by Christ's interpretation and additions to the Commandments as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount? A Russian communist may be just as moral and profess the same ethics as a deacon of the Church. I have talked with many professed atheists in Russia, visited in their homes. As a race, they are the kindliest and gentlest people with whom I have ever come in contact. They have as keen a sense of right and wrong as any high priest of the Faith.

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One of the reasons why the average American is so shocked by the spread of atheism in Russia is that he does not distinguish between religion and ethics. While it is true that the Russians are definitely atheistic and hostile to religion, I believe their morals and ethical standards are equal to those which exist in any country. Lenin claimed a high sense of morality and ethics for the Communist Party. But he vigorously denied that morality and ethics could be handed down by a divine being.

The Fundamental Dogma

Every Russian communist to-day still looks to the writings of Lenin for counsel. As a dialectic materialist, the latter naturally deduced his theory of ethics and morals not from the commandments of God, which he considered idealistic, but "from the facts and needs of the class struggle of the proletariat."

"Religion," said Lenin, "teaches those who toil in poverty all their lives to be resigned and patient in this world and consoles them without hope of reward in heaven. The Bolsheviks believe in making this life on earth as rich as possible. It will not do to wait until after life to atone the wrongs and injustices of these times. There probably is no after life." And almost every American would agree with him when he pleads for a state which "must not concern itself with religion" and where "everyone must be absolutely free to profess whatever religion he likes or to profess no religion at all"; when he declares that "no subsidies must be paid [by the state] to the established church . . . or religious societies."

Like all good communists, Lenin considered Tolstoy a back number. He could not understand how Tolstoy could decry the evils of Russia and yet preach the Christian dogma of non-resistance to oppression. Considering the history of reforms in Russia, it is no wonder that militant resistance is the watchword of the Bolsheviks. Every revolution except the last one failed, but in 1917 force and resistance were for the first time seriously tried and then maintained. Resistance brought success.

Even Gorky ran amuck of Lenin's enthusiastic atheism. He had written that "God seeking should be given up *for the time being*," and Lenin objected strongly to the phrase here in italics.

But Lenin never let his atheistic beliefs interfere with the development of his larger program based on the idea of freeing the exploited from the exploiters. Anti-religion was only part of the larger issue. "The Revolutionary proletariat," he declared, "will see to it that religion does really become a private matter, as far as the state is concerned." Subsequent events proved that he was right. Once the Soviets were established in Russia, atheism came almost automatically.

The Czarist Church

Although religion may still be considered a private matter, as far as the state is concerned, it is decidedly not a private matter from the point of view of the Party membership. To-day the Communist Party is made up of 100-per-cent atheists, and even that is not enough. A member must be a militant atheist, and if any member has any religious believers in his family it is his duty to "convert" them to atheism, or he is ousted from the Party. Nowadays no priest can get so much as his foot in the back door of the Communist Party.

Lenin urged the use of all material relating to the United States of America, "although it reveals least of all the official governmental ties between religion and capital." He claimed that the freedom our preachers had went only so far as to "preach what is advantageous for the bourgeoisie." He rejoiced at the world's keen interest in the Einstein theory and urged the philosophical magazines to use articles on this subject and on other developments in the field of natural science. He thought that as the natural and other sciences developed, became better understood and more completely accepted, people would gradually drift away from a religion based on the supernatural and divine. Science is now being taught in Russia with a vengeance.

But Lenin left unsaid several things which would help America understand why the Bolsheviks had to throw out religion along with the Romanovs. These two institutions were indissolubly linked with each other. If one fell, the other must tumble with it. The royal family perverted religion to stabilize its reign. It subtly proclaimed its holy origin. A crime against it was a crime against the Lord. I have seen copies of cheap, colored pictures which

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The god of Capital, enthroned on the safe, receives the prayers of the several religious faiths.

could be used as *ikons*, in which the double presentation of the royal family and the holy family was so clever, even in actual facial resemblance, that it left little to the imagination. These were distributed by millions to ignorant peasants.

Very few realize the discrimination in czarist Russia against those who did or did not profess a particular religion. When Lenin was beginning his fight against the "opium of the people," the publication of scientific literature was strictly forbidden and persecuted by the government. Official documents, passports, marriage certificates, and so on listed the individual's religion. And it is hard for us to understand the corrupt and ignorant nature of the established church. Prior to the founding of the Bolshevik régime and in its early stages the Church was definitely and militantly opposed to the establishment of Bolshevism. Naturally when that establishment became a fact former enemies were not considered present friends.

The Bolsheviks have never forgiven the Church for what they consider treasonable use of the connection between the Church and the state under the old régime. Of course, the Church, depending upon the monarch for protection, naturally used his colossal power to maintain it. Priests who acted as spies for the secret police utilized the confessional to their ends. They taught that revolution and resistance to the *status quo* were irreligious. In making a confession one was supposed to report communist activities to the priest. Many a communist plot was uncovered in this way; without knowing how they were betrayed, revolutionaries would find themselves exiled, as the result of a brother's confession. The Church was definitely counter-revolutionary, and it excommunicated and condemned to perdition all revolutionists.

Fighting the Bugaboo

In the universities of New Russia whole courses are now given in anti-religion. A friend of mine visited one of these classes just prior to the winter recess. The pupils would soon disband to return to their homes at Christmas time. The subject of the day was "How to Combat the Institution of Christmas." Pupils were stuffed full of ammunition which they were to use in their home towns by passing on the word to weak-kneed Russians who still believed in religion and therefore celebrated Christmas.

My friend, a former student in this same university, was asked to talk, and used his opportunity to inquire, "How about Christ? Wasn't he a reformer with many theories which coincide with your own?" Eager hands shot into the air. These young Russians are apt learners. Everyone wanted to answer, and the one who was called upon said, "Don't you know that Christ never existed? Haven't you ever read the German scholar Drew's book, *The Christ Myth*, which proves there is no historical Jesus?" "Yes," my friend replied, "but that theory has been exploded again and again." The students were not convinced. They were not as discerning as Lenin was, however. In 1902 he condemned Drew's book for its final conclusions and the author's plea at the end of the book for a regenerated and purged religion.

One of the most powerful influences in Russia is the Godless Society, comprising probably over four million members, all of them actively engaged in anti-religious propa-

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ganda. With their three periodicals and through their branches in thousands of villages throughout the Union, they scatter material which exposes the graft, corruption, and ignorance of the Church. The Godless Society maintains beautiful gardens and model farms to prove that it is not necessary for any priest to bless seed as it is being planted. In former times no peasant would think of planting a crop without a priest and the formality of having it blessed — for which a charge was made. In western Europe the Reformation put an end to the selling of blessings and dispensations but the Reformation never got as far as Russia. That is important.

Many churches still exist as places of worship, but the services are attended mainly by old people, mostly women, to whom religion is still an important factor. Some of the finest churches have been turned into anti-religious museums which, whether or not you are in sympathy with what they purport to show, are one of the most interesting features of a trip to Russia to-day. There are thousands of exhibits in these anti-religious museums. Many of them are gruesome indeed. Usually there is the unearthed corpse of some miracle-working priest who was supposed to come to life periodically throughout all time. But from the appearance of each corpse it is perfectly obvious that it is just as dead and infinitely less well preserved than the corpse of the Egyptian mummy alongside. Embalming fluid works better than miracles.

In the Moscow anti-religious museum there is a whole series of lifelike models in wax of the human embryo in all stages of development. By this there is demonstrated the reasonableness of the theory of evolution as opposed to the biblical story of creation. Every good communist knows all about the trial of the Fundamentalists at Dayton, Tennessee. Photographs and descriptive material of the trial are shown in the anti-religious museums, sometimes with the caption, "American professors are discharged from faculties for teaching evolution."

It is unfortunate that the average Russian gets the wrong impression of America. If we do it in Tennessee, they assume we must do it everywhere. The radio, movies, theater, bookstores, libraries, and even the ballet, all being under state control, are mobilized in the service of Soviet propaganda. Much of this propaganda is anti-religious.

Did the anti-religious feature of the Bolshevik program make it more difficult for the revolutionaries to establish their régime in a religious state? It would seem natural that in "Holy Russia" a new economic program would be subjected to less opposition if it were not anti-religious. I submit that the opposite is true. Strange as it may seem, I believe that the atheistic plank helped the Bolsheviks in their great scheme, but first we must know the facts.

Light Breaks On the *Kulak*

In the first place there never was such a thing as "Holy Russia." There never existed the Christ-like peasant celebrated in fiction. Although the great mass of stalwart *muzhiks* formed the backbone and support of orthodoxy, these same peasants were really pagan at heart. The Church did not concern itself with this. The average Russian peasant had little understanding of the true spirit of faith. He was only awed by the Byzantine splendor, the external gorgeousness, the mystic symbolism of a church which had lost sight of spiritual perfection in emphasizing the outward show.

Assured of its existence by the government, the Orthodox Church became lazy and fat. Unlike the successful religions of to-day, it was as dead as the Byzantine empire from whence it issued in the tenth century. Stagnated in the eighteenth century when Peter joined the Church to the state, its stagnation had increased during each succeeding century. It took no pains to occupy itself with inner virtue or spiritual perfection. It was not interested in the problems and ideals of the day. It was unmindful of the challenge of science, asleep to the social changes which would bring about its downfall. Never reformed, it was never purged. Always protected, it was never in combat — a condition religions seemed to have thrived on throughout the ages. Its most important discussions turned on the matter of spelling and other petty controversies. Should the Sign of the Cross be made with two fingers or one?

Religions which are effective to-day appeal to the everyday life and problems of their

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followers, but the Russian peasant on whom the Orthodox Church depended never connected the dazzle, color, and glitter; the spectacle of pageantry, however impressive, with his problems and trials. The clergy encouraged the ignorance of the peasant and tolerated the fakirs, witch doctors, and miracle men who preyed on his fanciful imagination throughout the great Russian countryside. Without realizing it, the Russian peasant was essentially a pagan. He wore his religion on his sleeve. The Bible was practically unknown to the rank and file. God was to be invoked for material things — to bless a crop, to end a drought, to fertilize a barren woman, to calve a cow, to heal a wound. Yes, even to lend success to contemplated crimes of murder, rape, and arson.

Now why did the program of atheism make it easier for the Bolsheviks to stage their revolution? Once the first shock was over, once the first step was taken, the eyes of the peasant were opened wide with wonder. He saw the mightiest officer of the church, the venerable Tikon, thrown into prison, but his jailers were not struck dead. Anti-Christians stripped the gold and jewels from the holy *ikons*, sold them, and yet God did not punish them. The miracle-working bodies of saints were unearthed and placed on view in anti-religious museums where all could see their obvious deadness, and the anti-religious museums occupied the very churches which were formerly the richest and most holy. Yet the ghouls went unscathed. Crops grew without the paid-for blessing, cows calved, mothers bore, everything went on as usual; and perhaps best of all, perhaps most important to the *kulak's* grasping, fist-like heart, he no longer had to make his yearly contribution of wheat, cloth, bread, and money to the "Little Father." It is the limited number of Protestants and Catholics and a few sects which cling most tenaciously to religion. If America to-day had the religion of czarist Russia, I think we would do away with it in one great stroke.

Russia Has a Soul

The Soviets are clever enough not to persecute religion physically. History has shown them how Christianity thrived on persecution. They promote their cause by propaganda, education, and mountains of literature — both scientific and anti-religious. By example, demonstration, and logic, atheism is made to seem like a great exhilarating adventure. In talking to boys and girls developing into manhood and womanhood, one gets the impression they are having the time of their lives. They gloat over it, boast of it, and giggle in doubtful derision when you say that you are not an atheist.

Why is their enthusiasm directed more against Christianity than any other faith? First, because Christianity was the faith they professed and, second, Christianity is the religion of the industrial world. Communism fills the void caused by the absence of religion. The fervor with which they embrace it is a fanatical fervor I have never seen in religious proselytes, not excluding the band and street troupes of the Salvation Army.

I am not easily moved emotionally, but once in a far-off Volga village I heard several hundred local youths sing out a welcome to a similar group of visiting youngsters. Each group had a leader. He reminded me of a cheer leader of our American type. I never saw so much whole-hearted enthusiasm and passion for a cause. The visitors were not planning to see a football game but to inspect a model collective farm, so that they could take home with them new ideas which would help them. As they sang to each other in a way in which only Russians can sing, I was moved as never before. I could not swallow. I blew my nose. I felt tears coming and had to walk away. What was it that affected me so? My heart went out to these earnest people who were to-morrow to step into harness and rule Russia for the future.

If enthusiasm, fervor, and passion for a cause mean success, Russia is bound to succeed. And herein lies Russia's soul. For Russia still has a soul, much more than she ever had when "Holy Russia" was supposed to exist. You may throw out a government; turn its economic system upside down; take from those who have and give to those who have not; set up a new order, new standards, new theories, new policies; change the whole order of things — but unless you wipe a country out you cannot destroy her soul. Religion in Russia *was* "the opium of the people."

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A NEW DEAL FABLE

BY CHARLES S. PETERSON

MR. SAMUEL, owner of the *Chiwaukee Daily Muse* ("The World's Greatest Newspaper") was worried. He had reason to be: things were not going at all well.

Beginning as a little four-page weekly, the *Muse* had grown to 100 pages a day, and the circulation was more than a million. The income was enormous, and Mr. Samuel had become very wealthy. Now, somehow, the thing seemed to be running away with itself, much to everyone's embarrassment.

When he started the paper, Mr. Samuel and his son, Jared, ran it alone. As it grew and when more sons and nephews were needed to carry on the enterprise, the simple, practical rules that were laid down in the original charter filled the bill very well. In the days of the boom, the business had become so very large and complex that Mr. Samuel had found it necessary to appoint an almost independent manager to run each department. And that is where the trouble all started. Each department head did about as he pleased and looked upon the General Manager as an interfering busybody, on those rare occasions when the latter plucked up sufficient courage to offer a suggestion. The department heads received a salary and a bonus based on production. This arrangement suited them very well, and some of them waxed prosperous.

The workmen, who were all related to Mr. Samuel, did not fare so well. Nor, in fact, did Mr. Samuel himself. The department heads, whose incomes depended upon their departmental production, ran their departments night and day and produced their heads off. The color department was turning out 3,000,000 magazine sections every Saturday, although the General Manager had frequently pointed out that the *Muse* required only 1,000,000. The composing room set up 250 pages daily, although no issue of the paper carried more than 100 pages. The circulation department was run so expensively and with so little efficiency that it seemed impossible to increase the circulation. The advertising department could not sell any more space, so the size of the paper could not be increased to use the surplus composition. Things were, indeed, in a bad way.

After several months of fruitless worry, Mr. Samuel discharged Mr. Mover, his General Manager. Mr. Mover was a well-meaning and honest man, but he was somewhat set in his ways. He believed in "letting things take their course." Mr. Samuel, who saw most of his departments headed for bankruptcy as the result of their frenzied overproduction, believed that things might better take a different course.

The new general manager, Mr. Rulplain, had lots of ideas, some of them very sound. He believed that it is best to send for a plumber when the plumbing is out of order and he insisted that a dentist could do more for a toothache than a carpenter. He saw that the situation at the *Muse* called for some straight thinking, so he sent for a group of advisers who made a business of thinking straight.

After studying the situation thoroughly, the spokesman for his group of advisers gave the new manager a report. "What is needed is coordination," he said, "and a little common sense. The color pressroom must be made to stop printing 3,000,000 magazine sections a week when the paper can only use 1,000,000; and, if the composing-room head insists on turning out 250 pages a day when he knows the paper has use for only 100, we recommend getting a new head for the composing room. Then get after the circulation department and get the cost of distribution down, and maybe we can sell more papers. In the meantime, let us see if we can't produce books or calendars

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or Christmas cards or something, to keep the equipment busy and all of the workmen on the job. Also we find that the head of the circulation department is making $1,000,000 a year, while some of his help is getting only five cents an hour. His salary should be cut, and the pay of his help increased. A million dollars a year is too much. Some of that should go to Mr. Samuel for dividends and some to his relatives in higher wages. Five cents an hour is too little. It isn't enough to live on. Mr. Samuel has to help the workmen out from his own pockets. He seems to catch it coming and going, which is not altogether fair."

"Sounds like good sense, boys," said the General Manager. "Believe we'll have to experiment with something along that line."

II

MR. SAMUEL was delighted with the new plan, and so were the workmen. But it didn't look so good to the department heads. "This is disloyalty to the Samuel family!" cried the head of the color department. "What inducement is there for me to develop my energy and initiative if I can't make $1,000,000 a year?"

"Well," said Mr. Samuel thoughtfully, "seems to me it would be still harder for the help to develop energy and initiative on five cents an hour."

"This is a violation of our sacred charter!" cried all the department heads in unison. "There is no mention of co-ordination in the charter."

"Of course not," said Mr. Samuel peevishly. "When I drew up that charter, my boy Jared and I were the entire force. I used to co-ordinate Jared in the woodshed, but you fellows are too many for me."

As a last attempt, a big dinner was given by the department heads for themselves and possible sympathizers. Mr. Samuel was not invited, but he heard the proceedings over the radio. A number of eminent scientists told the assembly how in 100 years all would be well, as by that time new methods would have been found to absorb all the magazine sections and to use up the surplus composition.

"I'm glad we'll be all right in 100 years," said Mr. Samuel, "but what's worrying me is the next 100 days."

The most popular speaker of the evening was the celebrated Dr. Ben Crank of the University of Wiscota, who made the welkin ring with his eloquence. "Produce!" he shouted, amid the thunderous applause of the assembled department heads. "If you curtail production of magazine sections and of the pages, you are committing a crime against humanity and you are disloyal to the Samuel family. Produce!"

Amid great enthusiasm the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, that it is disloyalty to the Samuel family to attempt to co-ordinate the departments of the *Daily Muse*;

"That to limit the production of magazine sections and the number of pages turned out by the composing room to what is actually needed by the paper would be regimentation and against the historic spirit of our American institutions;

"That to ask the head of a department to accept less than $1,000,000 a year for his services would be striking directly at that spirit of energy and initiative which has made the department heads of the *Daily Muse* so prosperous;

"That increasing the wages of the workers above five cents an hour or shortening their hours would be encouraging extravagance and idleness, which would work them a grievous injury;

"That if the workers cannot get along on five cents an hour Mr. Samuel should assist them out of his private pocket, for they are his relatives anyhow."

The meeting adjourned amid great enthusiasm.

"But what'll I do with the stuff after it's produced?" asked Mr. Samuel, in a polite but plaintive voice, when he met Dr. Crank the next day.

"Sir," said Dr. Crank coldly, "That is *your* problem."

"I suspected as much," said Mr. Samuel sadly.

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THE WAGES OF CHARITY

BY LUCILE GREBENC

SOME TIME ago I wrote an article describing an experiment I had carried out. In good times, I had bought a small farm in Connecticut and used it for week-ending, because getting in touch with the earth always has a very salutary effect upon me. When bad times came and I remained jobless for two years and savings had reached the vanishing point represented by sixty dollars, I decided to retire to this little place and at least raise all the food I would need, until things became more hopeful in my profession. The experiment proved a success.

The description of this experiment, first published in THE FORUM and then in *The Reader's Digest*, had an interesting aftermath. It brought a shower of letters from all over the country, letters which can readily be divided into two categories. On the one hand were those from people who had found, as I had, that the country was good for them. These either expressed appreciation of the experiences I had had or described their own of a similar character. They revealed altogether a love of the land and the cyclical manifestations of nature which touched me closely. They were extremely interesting. On the other hand was another group upon which I wish to dwell, because the writers are representative of a large proportion of our population.

A good many years of experience at making a living in a competitive society, supported by the same number of years of observation of the scene around, has wrought in me the conviction that in society a minority constitutes a leaning post and a majority, the leaners. A dog no sooner has a bone but three or four others are after it. These will not hunt their own. That would require initiative and labor. But let one do the pioneer work — that is, conceive the idea of getting a bone and follow up the idea by acquiring that article — and there will promptly be others who will be eagerly willing to share it or even accept the whole of it, if offered.

The individuals represented in the group of letters I wish to stress are typical of a class that is growing increasingly numerous. There has, of course, been such a mixture of strong and weak in every civilization, but never before were conditions so favorable for a continued growth of the weaker element. All race-suicide theories to the contrary, human beings are increasing at an incredible rate and, sadly enough, more from the bottom of the seed stem than from the top or even the middle. These people who wrote me had one purpose in common. All wanted me to help them — more specifically, help them to the country, where they said they wished to do as I did. This is no unusual happening, because, just as in the case of the dog with the bone, as soon as publicity is focused upon a successful individual, the pleas for help begin to pour in. Not unusual, as I say, but it will be interesting to analyze these letters from a sociological point of view.

II

THE LETTERS were couched in a variety of phraseology, colored by the individual habit of thought, educational equipment, and psychic make-up. But all registered the same desire for escape, the same feeling of inadequacy within the individual in his present condition, and the same feeling that if he could get away (in this case into the country) he would be miraculously fulfilled. All lacked practical ideas; all failed to give me, who was supposed to act as the god in the machine, any conception of what the writers were like or were qualified to do.

One girl asked me to help her find a farm to rent, so that she could make a living raising

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vegetables for herself, along with a few chickens and a goat. She did not explain how the rent would be paid. Nor did she tell me whether she knew anything at all about farming on a commercial scale. Apparently she was unaware that farmers are having a hard time making their investments pay, and foreclosure of farm lands had obviously never come to her attention.

Another woman said that she had always wanted to do what I had done, but lacked the courage. Would I advise her? Another wrote that it would help if he could see my place and make a note of my area under cultivation (!) and so on. One girl claimed she needed solitude in the country in order to recuperate from a physical and psychic shock: she wanted to live on my place for that purpose. When this proposal was rejected, there followed the expected recriminations, to the effect that what ailed the world was indifference — happiness apparently consisting in having one's own way, regardless of the common privileges of others. And so they go on. In their own way, such communications prove that the trouble with the world is not indifference but quite the contrary. Misplaced altruism has become so common that help is expected rather than received with a sense of obligation. Here are exhibited all the undesirable weaknesses infesting our seed stock: lack of reasoning power, lack of insight into the personal problem, lack of courage, lack of initiative, lack of industry, and a softness of moral fiber that is most discouraging to find.

III

Charity is no longer a virtue; on the contrary, it is a vice. From its original function as an emergency measure employed in worthy causes it has deteriorated into a festering habit or into commercial enterprise. It has served to keep alive and potent untold numbers of incapable, undesirable individuals, so that they could again reproduce their kind by geometrical progression. Under the more stringent laws of natural selection, such individuals would have fallen by the wayside before they had time to propagate their kind. And, conversely, it has increased the burden of capable members of society to the point where they must limit the perpetuation of a stock racially and socially desirable, because it is impossible for them economically to do well by their children and at the same time pay for the upkeep of these unproductive individuals. Good intentions in charity lead to parasitism.

Engaged upon a piece of research, I have recently been going over hundreds of hospital case histories. Without particularly searching for such figures, I have been appalled by the birth rate of infants from incompetent stock. False sentimentality argues that all babies have a right to be born. I deny it. In the first place, the babies have nothing whatever to do with the matter, being purely biological accidents. In the second place, what most good, sentimental people do not know is that in the majority of cases another baby assumes about as much importance or significance as breakfast and certainly less than a possible trip to the country or seashore. Such mechanical breeding constitutes a biological luxury for the state. The family income, too small even for two, proves more and more inadequate, for the earning power of the head is probably remaining at a standstill. Charity organizations are called upon, first for food, then for rent, then for placement for the superfluous children. This means more charity organizations, more children's homes and camps and convalescent homes and so on, all maintained by funds contributed by the productive members of society. Soon the children arrive at maturity, and again begins the reproduction of their kind with a repetition of the process all round. Even with a good stock, such dependence constitutes an unpropitious start in life, but with a stock already inferior the outlook is for further parasitism. Receiving from others soon grows to be a habit and finally a necessity taken for granted.

IV

I wish to make it clear that the cases I have before me do not represent solely the lowest mental stratum of society. An unskilled laborer may possess, potentially, desirable qualities, such as honesty, industry, common sense, and moral strength, to transmit to the next and to the next generation. And these qualities can be as non-existent among the socially elect as at the other end of the scale. It takes all kinds to make up a society, but no society can grow if it is saddled with an

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ever-increasing load of human parasites which have to be boosted and hoisted and held up.

I recall having once accidentally uncovered with my rake a hare's nest on my meadow. I hastened to cover it up again, hoping no damage had been done. Apparently, however, my unintentional disruption of the nest had injured one of the litter, for, weeks later, when I again visited the spot, all but one had left to pursue their own careers. A single youngster had died sitting at the opening of the nest. He could not shift for himself, and the wild does not practice altruism. Pathetic, true; but the laws of nature, if she is left to herself, are rigorous and salutary. This little creature succumbed because of an unforeseen accident, and those of his brothers will succumb who are unable to cope with the stronger and quicker-witted about them. There will be no fond State to foster the dull-witted and incompetent. In man, a physical handicap accidentally acquired is not necessarily a barrier to a successful life. Such handicaps can usually be circumvented, but nothing can replace mental obliquity, an inferior moral make-up, or lack of spiritual force. In the name of charity or altruism, man has taken into his own hands the management of his species and, in my opinion, has done a poor job.

V

But let us take up in turn the characteristics of these people whose letters are before me. If they do not represent those who habitually receive support from the State or private philanthropic enterprises, they none the less, though in a manner not so conspicuous, receive help from their stronger fellows. It is an admirable index of their lack of reasoning power that, without a single exception, these suppliants for a leaning post missed the entire point of my article — that I did what I did on my own initiative and without asking or receiving help. Such surface skimming is characteristic of much of the mental exercise which promises success to the bulk of the magazines published to-day. And added to the absence of logic is deficiency in educational background.

At present more and more stress in education is being placed upon what will be of "practical" value as soon as the student leaves the schoolroom. Latin and logic are thrown into the discard, for what earthly use is a dead language? It is forgotten that the function of the "dead" languages, of logic, and of similar exercises is not to add to the sum total of the student's parlor tricks but to discipline the mind, when it is still plastic, in the processes of accurate reasoning and methodical thought — things which will be of far greater use to the adult than all the smatterings of so-called practical subjects he can accumulate. But discipline, whether mental or spiritual, is frowned upon by newer schools. No artist or artisan can become skilled or creative in his field unless he acquires the technic necessary as an outlet for his thought. The use of the mind is no exception to the rule that practice, even though it may not perfect, will at least improve.

These people lack initiative. Otherwise they would have said not, "Help me," but, "That sounds like a way out. How can I apply it to my own case?" Purely in the interests of experiment I mentioned to some of these individuals the fact that some years ago, when I was recovering from an illness and felt that recuperation in the country was indicated, I advertised in a country newspaper for a job doing outside chores. This scheme worked admirably for me at the time, but I wanted to see what would be the reaction of these people to the suggestion that there are more ways of floating a camel than by filling it with water. Would they think, "Well, that's another way out. What can I do with it?" Not at all. The girl who wanted me to turn over my house to her, after finding that her argument met with no success, asked, after showering me with recriminations, in what paper she should advertise "for a bed on green vegetables and what food I would need." Not even the initiative to select a suitable paper. Even this information was to be laid in her lap. And none of these people thought of something different. They had no ideas.

These people lack insight. They know that something has gone wrong with their scheme of existence but they don't know what it is and are incapable of finding out. A sojourn in the country, they decide, is the solution. Not because it is the country but because it is not the city, where they have failed, and because, at the moment, they have happened upon an article

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dealing with the successful solution of another's problem. As a matter of fact, I am very skeptical of these sudden frenzies to take to the land. People who, like Antæus, need to dip down into contact with the earth to revive their spirits are very soon aware of the need. They do not suffer momentary spasms for the land from reading what someone else has derived from contact with nature.

VI

While I was in the country last summer, laboring over the soil, battling pests, carrying water in droughts, pruning, hoeing, weeding, and doing the thousand and one things needful if one expects a generous response from the earth, I received a letter from another woman whom I have known for some years. She wrote, "You don't know how I envy you being in the country away from the city, with that wonderful air and sunshine, *and no worry about money*." The italics are mine. It is typical of a good proportion of thoughtless people to believe that a country existence requires neither labor nor money nor anything that is necessary in the city. I know that this person pictured me, on a hot day, sitting under an awning or a tree, sipping a cool drink, while the birds chirped and the apples dropped into my lap and the beans and the corn and tomatoes betook themselves of their own accord to the canner and thence to the pantry shelves. She never wondered where the sugar and the coffee and the flour came from, or oil for the stove or candles for light. She may have envied the picture *she* had of me but she would not have envied me in person, had she been obliged to swap jobs. She is another one of these people who blame their hard luck on the depression. What a handy catch-all that proved to be. Yet I know for a fact that she was a self-made failure before the depression in business got under way. She is one of the many who lack industry. Even during the worst years she was offered positions as governess, for which she is particularly qualified. But she refused such "slavery." She had opportunities in radio, for she has a promising voice, but she would not work at its improvement. She objects to eight-hour days, five days a week. She is typical of that numerous tribe of unproductive individuals who reject self-discipline, lack industry, and whose greatest occupation in life is hoping for a job combining a minimum of labor with a maximum of wage.

None of such people, brought up in an artificial environment where material luxuries have come to be considered necessities, would be able to raise a crop on the land. One cannot choose one's weather there or coddle oneself when things are growing into the hand. The soil must be tilled at the proper time, its fruit must be taken when it is ready, or it is lost. There is labor carrying water uphill from a spring, and how many would be content without a button to push for light, a handle to turn for fuel, a tap to manipulate for water, a laundry to do the wash, and a telephone and radio to maintain contacts with a gregarious society?

VII

Last, but by far not least, these people lack the most fundamental requisite for a successful life — courage. They are afraid. They admit it. They are miserable, unhappy, dissatisfied, in a rut; yet they are afraid of taking the initiative which would change the color of their lives. The little certainty in hand, uncertain though it be, is clutched with a tenacity worthy of better things. Where is the fire and the drive and the forward-looking spirit of the pioneer? What a joy it would be to see human beings take hold of their problems with both hands as a child grasps whatever it can reach. A child may get burned or bitten, and an adult may fail in a venture, but what of it? A child will not weep long if it has not been coddled, and an adult should be able to drop an imperfect venture without maudlin gawpings and reach out for more. A sense of personal integrity is a shield of confidence and strength; fears are most often bugaboos of the imagination that can be dispelled by the light of facts faced with honesty.

I allow no one to tell me that upon me depends his welfare. It would not be true. One's welfare depends upon oneself; and the sooner the individual realizes this and admits it, the sooner will he learn to solve his own problems. How can I advise anyone about going to the country to do as I did? No two persons will react in the same way to a given set of circumstances. What meant spiritual fulfillment to me

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may drive another insane. How can anyone be expected to inject courage into an organism to which it is foreign? And I would distrust such fearful people in the solitude of the country. If they have such terrors when they start, they would not suddenly grow brave as lions in the face of wholly unexpected difficulties.

But those who possess or who have developed the faculty of solving their own problems are usually called upon to help solve those of the less efficient, the less dependable, the softer members of their society. And an altruistic responsibility toward these inadequates has become so ingrained in the social consciousness that, if its value be questioned or its execution refused, the guilty party is set down as uncharitable, unkind, inhuman, indifferent. And thus a great many admirable people give, against their personal convictions, against their better judgment, against their conscience, and beyond their genuine ability to afford the gift, simply to avoid this undeserved but threatened stigma.

Such are the wages of charity.

My Friend

I know my friend, I think, but he
Is really almost dark to me.

He walks by me in broad daylight
Like one who bears across the night
A little lantern, weak and dim.
Sometimes the glow will fall on him,
His face will shine, an open book;
But even as I turn and look,
He puts the light down from his face
And walks the dark, unmeasured space
Between two stars from me again.
I know the secret ways of rain,
And how the small hands will fold over,
When the dew falls, on the clover.
I know the geometry of lines
Which tell the years inside the pines.
But why my friend loves me and not
Another man, what seedlike thought
Will rise and cover him with bloom,
I do not know. We walk the doom
Of night together, having eyes
That are no use to us. Our thighs
May touch, but never once our minds.
The little light between us blinds,
And it can never tell us clear
Why he and I are walking here
In this corner of the vast
Infinity that holds us fast.

Yet it greatly pleases me
To make a friend of mystery.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin

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UNNECESSARY OPERATIONS

BY A LAYMAN

Lying on a hard, table-like bed, swathed in spotless white linen, hemmed in by polished enamel and silver apparatus that shines antiseptically in the glare of huge, blue-white lamps, a man patiently awaits the ether cone of an anæsthetist. There flashes on the screen of his mind a jumbled mass of confused images. He thinks of the cost of his operation, the danger, the probable results. In sharper focus are the white figures which manipulate the grotesque machinery around him, glance down at him with their professionally assuring smiles. It is all carried out with apparently impeccable efficiency. He imagines the masked surgeons with their deft, rubber-gloved hands, the glittering, keen-cutting instruments, the silent and swift routine of an operation. He cannot help but feel that, although he has paid well for it, he is the center of an impressive and serious affair. He hopes to find himself a well man at the conclusion of this fine show. He reckons the costs and decides that he is getting his money's worth. But the economics of an operation are not computed in dollars and cents. Its values are more abstract, omnipotent, irrevocable, and eccentric.

A considerable amount of drivel about the glories of medicine, the wonders of surgery, the altruism of doctors has been written for lay consumption. Certainly the art of healing has been developed remarkably in the past century. But the emphasis is on a better technique rather than curative powers. Recently four very prominent doctors were asked in a St. Louis club what would be the increase in the city death rate, barring epidemics, should all the medical practitioners die. They answered, between three and five per cent.

The primary function of the medical practitioner is still to prevent disease and relieve pain. The profession of medicine has been fawned upon unctuously by those who forget that doctors remain men in spite of the idealistic implications of their business. In justice it must be said that legitimate physicians are usually more than ordinarily self-sacrificing and honest. But that does not make all doctors intelligent, proficient, and totally unselfish. And the layman must realize that medicine cannot provide a new body; it merely patches up one that is defective, in the hope that it will run more efficiently.

Only a small percentage of the people operated on are aware of just what they are doing to their bodies when they submit to a surgeon's knife. They may feel no pain when an appendix is removed. But the mere act of cutting into their living flesh subjects their systems to a shock from which it may take considerable time to recover. A complete anæsthesia reduces the life processes to the very brink of death — a severe strain on the healthiest body. The removal of some unessential tissue may permit living to continue, but it impairs vitality. A comparatively small percentage of operations is one-hundred-per-cent successful.

All of this has no meaning for the man who is really ill and who must depend upon the boon of surgery to give him the fullest life. But to that vast category of persons who think that they are ill and insist upon an operation without being aware of its serious implications it means simply that they are paying too much for the whistle of their whims. It would be impossible to discover how many such dupes there are. Dr. Walter C. Alverez of the Mayo Clinic has computed that one out of every hundred of the general population is "nervously inadequate," which, according to his experience, means that one out of every hundred is susceptible to an operation for some ailment that is physiologically non-existent. It is a generally accepted fact that well over fifty per cent of hospital beds in the United States

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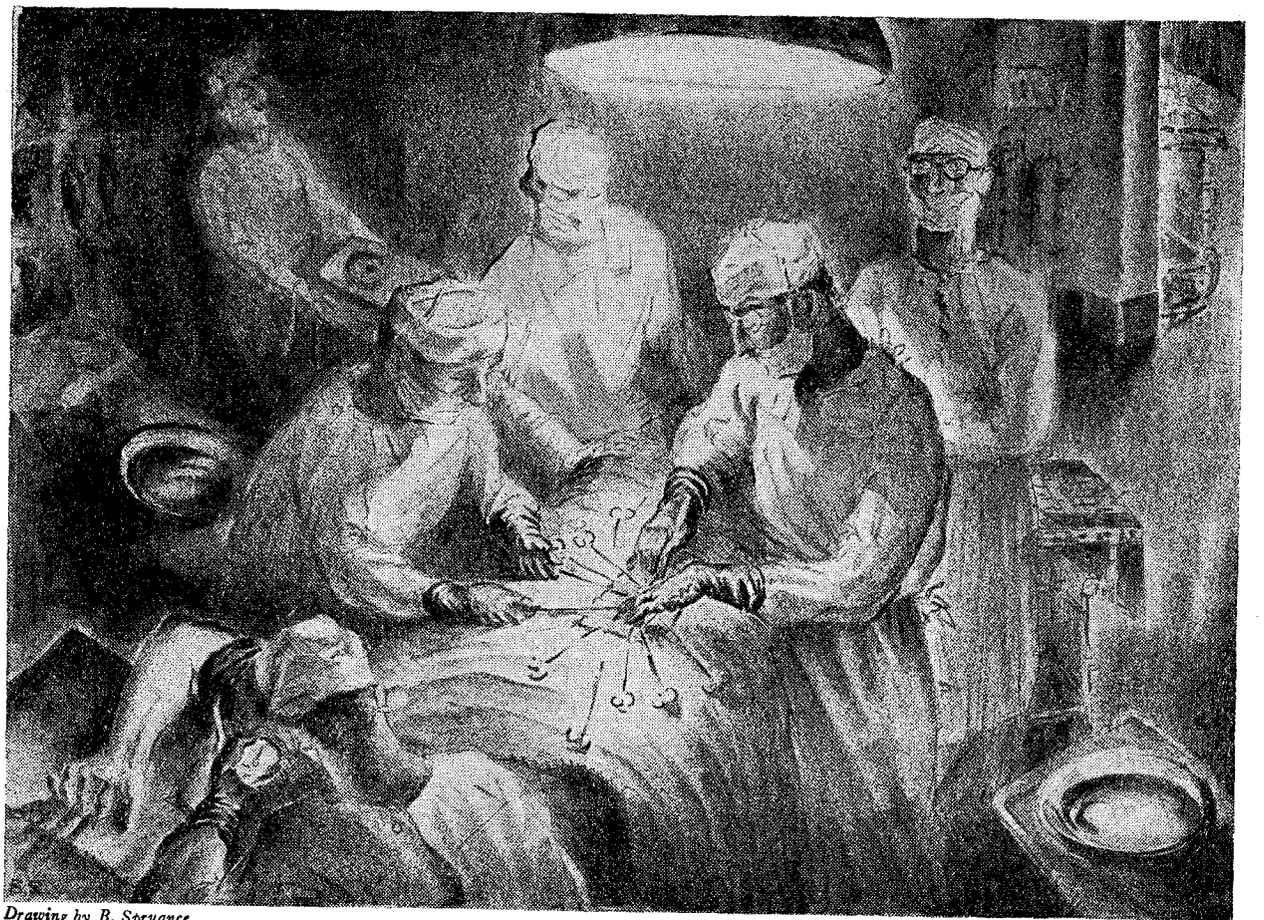

Drawing by B. Spruance *Courtesy of Kennedy and Company*

are occupied by nervous and mental patients. Some highly reputed doctors have said that from forty to sixty per cent of all operations for appendicitis are avoidable. Other well-informed medical authorities claim that two out of every five operations are frankly unnecessary.

The fault is not wholly that of honest physicians. Owing to the complexity of the human organism and the limitations of medical intelligence a case may easily be incorrectly diagnosed. But there is little excuse for a doctor to order an operation before he is sure that his patient's illness is physiologically real. Dr. Alverez writes:

> It is no disgrace to diagnose cholecystitis and to find, at operation, a perforating duodenal ulcer or appendicitis. . . . But it is a disgrace to diagnose cholecystitis and then, after a disappointing operation, to discover that all the symptoms were due to worry over a broken engagement.

But the doctor's problem is not solved when he discovers that a stomach ulcer is merely a nagging wife. The patient knows that he has a pain, that he cannot digest his food. From his thimbleful of medical knowledge he assumes that he has an ulcer, because that to him is reasonable. If the family doctor tells him there is nothing wrong with his stomach he puts that doctor down as a man who does not know his business and looks for another who will diagnose the case to his satisfaction. The family physician knows that he has many unscrupulous colleagues who are willing to humor a patient's whim for the resulting fee. He also knows that a useless operation might impair the patient's health and quite probably be totally valueless in the bargain.

Such a doctor has three alternatives. He may order the operation himself to prevent the patient's falling into the hands of a quack. He may devise a harmless treatment, such as bread pills, to satisfy the patient's qualms. Or he may try to make the patient see reason. This last course is by far the best and most difficult.

Surgery Is Like Morphine

From the point of view of the candidate for an unnecessary operation it is essential that he consult a doctor in whom he can have faith.

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The wisdom of health is never to let any pain go unattended. When he is assured by such an adviser that there is no reason to send him posthaste to an operating room, he must be willing to accept the cure prescribed for his disease. Obviously it is easier to write of such physicians than to find them.

Frequently, unnecessary operations are for "functional troubles" — mucous colitis, migraine, cholecystitis, duodenal ulcer, appendicitis. All of these occur in the abdomen, where the difficulty of diagnosis is great. The patient has a "pain in the stomach" and by his lay logic immediately concludes that there is the seat of his trouble. He does not realize that the neuro-muscular structure of the human body is so infinitely complicated that an emotional maladjustment can cause pain and even serious disorder in any one of the thousand sensitive body centers. The cure of such difficulty is not necessarily in removing, scraping, or lopping off part of some tissue. The original maladjustment must be eradicated.

A case in point is the method of Dr. Edmund Jacobson, of Chicago, who found that mucous colitis was frequently caused by hyper neuro-muscular tension. By reducing this tension he removed the disorder. Such methods are not cure-alls, but they illustrate how the too-popular surgical methods can be avoided.

At the other extreme, of course, are those who have an operation phobia. They will submit to the most arrant nonsense simply to avoid an operating room. They go rather to quacks who advertise bogus treatments guaranteed to cure anything from cancer to bunions without cutting a single tissue. The result of such idiocy is usually an aggravated disorder beyond the skill of the best surgeon. But the tendency to-day is to emphasize medical neglect alone. Failure to see a doctor for fear of what he will prescribe and belief in quacks cause more deaths than all unnecessary operations together. Just as real, every bit as stupid, and quite as destructive of human health is the operation mania.

Nothing is more banal than the pride of a lady just returned from a hospital where, amidst scientific splendor, a section of her gall bladder was removed. Beyond this conversational banality there is a tragic illusion. An operation may stimulate the imagination. It does not stimulate the body. Surgery, like morphine, is a great boon to mankind. Technical proficiency, an aura of mystery have brought it almost into the realm of art. But like morphine, surgery can be and is abused.

The Doctor as a Scientist

Medicine is a great science. The difference between the average doctor and the scientist is that the scientist acts upon a continually suspended judgment. The medical practitioner cannot always afford to wait until all angles of a case have been considered, because he must deal with the practical emergencies of the moment. But often and legitimately the medical profession is blamed with being too hasty, too cocksure of facts that are at best conjectures. No good doctor can accept an inflexible premise as to just how the intricate human organism will react. There are no such rules but merely a set of practicable averages. When the stake is a human life it is obviously the doctor's business to be as much of a scientist as possible under the circumstances and not let himself be carried away by his prejudices.

Doctors in a superior manner assert that the patient knows nothing about his body. But the patient does know when he does not feel well. And it is the business of the doctor who respects the implications of his profession to cure as effectively as possible that illness, whether it be physiologically real or imaginary. The doctor has no more right to be upstage about his knowledge than the teacher or research chemist. His services to mankind are perhaps more direct, but his mistakes are just as frequent and infinitely more fatal.

Obviously, the layman must put his faith in the physician who knows more of the human body than he and who can probably get for him a maximum of health under the circumstances. In spite of much excellent medical advice and skill, the unwise patient very often does, through his own stupidity, come to grief. But, for all the foolish mistakes the untutored patient makes in search of his health, the doctor must remember that in the final analysis the cause of much human futility and misery — the unnecessary operation — is usually a result of the ignorance, intolerance, or dishonesty of the medical profession itself.

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ANOTHER HALF PINT

Clearing the Milk Mess

BY THOMAS H. McINNERNEY

THE REMARK was once made that, if Chinamen should demand shirt tails half an inch shorter, the textile mills in Manchester would suffer a serious economic crisis. On the same principle, if each American should drink one glass more of milk daily (thus raising the consumption to the minimum standard universally set by health authorities), there would be no milk "problem" to-day, no agitation for federal investigation of the milk industry.

One hesitates to use the phrase "overproduction of milk," because in a theoretical sense there can be no overproduction of a commodity while the world is still in need of it. In a theoretical sense, there is, of course, no overproduction of anything (except things that are inherently harmful), because the world at the moment needs all that can be produced. From the standpoint of economics, however, production must be considered in relation to a market that offers a fair return to the producer. All of this is obvious sixth-reader economics.

Milk production and the *per-capita* consumption of milk in all forms steadily increased until 1931. Then, at a date much later than that of other declines, the dairy industry began to feel the depression. *Per-capita* consumption declined, but production kept on rising. As Secretary of Agriculture Wallace stated on April 2 of this year:

> Dairy farmers did not curtail. They kept on producing, as the records show. Even after the depression struck, the output of milk kept on growing. It increased two billion pounds from 1930 to 1932, to a record level.

Last year the milk output amounted to 102,309,000,000 pounds (about 47½ billion quarts), an increase of 17 per cent in the 10 years since 1924. The number of milk cows also increased about 17 per cent, to an all-time peak of 26,062,000.

This increase in the number and size of dairy farms is chiefly due to the economic advantages of this branch of agriculture. Milk production has long been by far the most profitable agricultural enterprise. Even last year the income from dairy farming amounted to $1,250,000,000, which is about one fifth of the total agricultural income. In times of depression, such as 1921 and 1929, milk prices have declined less than those of other farm commodities. Also, the farmer is usually paid currently in cash for his milk and does not need to wait until the end of the season. Attracted by these considerations, grain, cotton, and vegetable farmers have been adding a few cows to their farms to supplement their incomes. And the net result is that production has mounted.

That is the background. There is one more fact to go into it. When the average person thinks of milk, he means milk in a bottle. If all milk were sold that way, there wouldn't be any real trouble, since that kind of milk brings the farmer the highest price. But less than 40 per cent of the milk produced is sold as fluid milk for beverage and cooking purposes; the balance is used for milk products, about 40 per cent of this going into butter and the rest into cheese, ice cream, condensed and evaporated milks, and so on.

These two general classes of milk — fluid milk and manufacturing milk — are important because they represent the two great economic divisions in the industry. Fluid milk brings the higher price of the two. It is generally sold in a restricted area, protected by health regulations. Hence the price is locally determined and is not affected by national competition.

"Manufacturing milk," however, sells in a national market, since most milk products can be shipped anywhere. Allowing for the freight differential, a wholesale butter distributor will pay no more for butter on the Atlantic sea-

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board than he would have to pay for it in Wisconsin. The price for the milk (or butter fat) used to make this butter is therefore dependent entirely upon nation-wide supply and demand. The fluid-milk market is relatively stable, and, when the output of milk increases, the additional supply goes into milk products, principally butter. With the heavy milk production of the past three years, more and more milk has gone into milk products, increasing their supply, which in turn decreased their selling price. Since the price the farmer gets is based on the selling price of both milk and milk products, his return has necessarily declined.

A quart of Grade B fluid milk, for example, may sell at a retail price of 12 cents. A quart of milk used for butter has a much lower value: a pound of butter sells for 25½ cents (New York wholesale price, March, 1934) and it takes about 10½ quarts of milk to make it. Similarly, a pound of American cheese sells at 16 cents (New York wholesale price, March, 1934), and it takes 4½ or 5 quarts to make it.

II

In the article, "The Milk Mess," in the May issue of The Forum, the author, Charles H. Melish, maintains that the distributors have made enormous profits out of their share of the milk price. He refers to the figures given by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace for the profits of milk distributors in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. Nobody knows how the Secretary calculated these profits. The distributors indignantly deny them. As Mr. Melish says: "In arriving at this figure, excessive salaries and bonuses to officers, and certain other items which confuse the issue, were eliminated by the government auditors." The amounts and items so eliminated were never made public by the Secretary or his auditors, and the basis of the estimate is unknown.

There is, however, a very complete report of the costs and profits of milk distribution issued by the New York State Division of Milk Control. The New York State Legislature appropriated $25,000 for this study, which was made by Dr. Leland Spencer, of the State College of Agriculture at Cornell University. The final report was made public in April of this year. It covers the operation of 19 milk dealers in New York City for the month of August, 1933.

The report shows that the profits of these dealers amounted to $.00007 per quart, or about one cent for every 143 quarts sold. According to the usual accounting procedure, this profit would yield a return on investment equal to one eighth of one per cent a year. Only five of the 19 dealers made any profit on their August operations.

For the 21 upstate dealers under examination, the report showed a profit of one seventh of a cent per quart and a return on investment amounting to 3.8 per cent a year. Ten of the 21 dealers failed to make any profit at all.

These figures would hardly justify the charge of exorbitant profits in milk distribution.

In New York City the average selling price per quart, including milk sold as fluid and milk sold for milk products, amounted to 8.65 cents. The average production cost was 4.44 cents, 51.3 per cent of the selling price. The gross spread therefore averaged 4.2 cents. This represents the amount left to cover the dealer's costs of distribution and to permit him a profit, if any. The report stated:

> It is practically certain that very few milk dealers in New York City are making profits equal to what is considered a normal return on invested capital.

III

"Cost of milk distribution" covers, in a phrase, the most extensive system of package delivery in any industry, anywhere. Milk distribution in the United States is not duplicated in any other country. It represents a service to which Americans are now accustomed and which they apparently demand.

The American people drinks about 50,000,000 quarts of milk a day. A large part of this is delivered to the home by the distributors. In stormy or fair weather every night thousands of wagons, thousands of horses, and thousands of men begin the business of delivering this milk to the nation's homes. No department store faces anything like the same delivery problem. In New York City alone, for example, 12,000 milk wagons are engaged in the hours between midnight and eight a.m. in delivering some 4,000,000 bottles of milk to the city's doorsteps.

The distributor's services begin at the company's receiving station, to which the farmer takes or sends his milk. The milk must be

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weighed and tested for butter fat, the element which gives it its richness. It must be cooled and prepared for shipment by truck and railroad in 40-quart cans or in large, glass-lined tank trucks (really thermos bottles on wheels). The distributor ships the milk to his plants in the city, where it is checked not only by the department of health but by the distributor's own inspectors.

As a rule, fluid milk must be either pasteurized or certified. The pasteurization process is simple in itself — the milk is merely heated to a temperature of 143 degrees Fahrenheit for half an hour to kill harmful bacteria — but, where large quantities of milk are handled, elaborate machinery is necessary. The milk then flows by pipe to the bottling apparatus, which may have a capacity of some 10,000 bottles an hour. The bottles have previously been sterilized for at least half an hour in bottle-washing machines, which in the larger plants have a capacity of over 200,000 a day. The bottles are sealed by machines, passed in cases out to the delivery platforms, and loaded on the milk wagons for final delivery.

This brief description has been given in order to indicate the operations which cost the distributor about five cents for every quart of milk. The wage-paid labor is the largest item of the distributor's cost. The milkman has a difficult job, particularly in a city like New York, where traffic is congested and where stair-climbing to apartments on different floors is an arduous part of his labor.

Because of the operations described above, a large volume of sales is an important factor in reducing the cost per quart. The Spencer report, previously referred to, showed that the larger distributor not only had a lower unit cost than the smaller distributor but that the administration cost per quart of milk was much lower than in the case of the smaller company.

IV

The two largest companies in the milk industry are National Dairy Products Corporation and the Borden Company. They are, as Mr. Melish took pains to point out, large corporations and they pay dividends to their stockholders. The net income of the National Dairy Products Corporation for the year 1933 amounted to 3.1 per cent of sales. The net income for the Borden Company amounted to 2.5 per cent of sales. Mr. Melish is wrong in stating that "neither company sees fit to reveal the amount of milk it handles." The National Dairy Products Corporation, in its leaflets to stockholders and in its testimony presented before the United States Senate committee investigating milk distribution in the District of Columbia last fall, pointed out that it handles less than 9 per cent of the total milk production of the country and sells about 6 per cent of the fluid milk distributed retail and wholesale in the United States. Even in normal times its profit amounts to only a fraction of a cent a quart.

There is no one company that dominates the milk industry, and no such thing as a monopoly exists. No company can control the supply of the product, since that is entirely in the hands of the farmers. The distributors usually buy their milk from co-operative associations of producers. These are collective-bargaining organizations, and no fair-minded distributor questions the soundness of the principle upon which they are established. The association gives the independent farmer a bargaining power which he would not otherwise have. Mr. Melish describes Secretary Wallace as having "hinted very broadly that he expected that some . . . form of collusion might exist" between certain leaders of these associations and certain milk distributors. That is possible in isolated instances, wholly improbable on a scale of any importance. The milksheds throughout the country are distinct and subject to different regulations; the dairy farmers are numerous and proverbially independent; there are thousands of independent milk companies (one of the industry's problems is the ease with which a man can become a milk dealer); competition in distributing milk is keen, and there is no control over the supply.

Nevertheless, it is clear that all is not well with the milk industry at the moment, particularly in the Middle West. As has been stated earlier in this article, the supply of milk for by-product purposes has been large, and the income from this milk is small. Mr. Melish, suspicious of the dealers, suggests a Milkshed Authority which could be tried out experimentally in New York. This would be free "from political influence and control" and "it

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would take over all distribution of fluid milk within the milkshed. Equipment might be rented or purchased from the existing distributors." The producers would be paid a profit; the milk would be sold to the public at cost.

This certainly could be done. We could do it for bread or tomatoes or ice or for any industry. The question is: Why should we? Is there any magic in state ownership of ordinary enterprises which will make them profitable where, under private management, they were not earning a fair return? In making his recommendation, Mr. Melish refers to the then-preliminary report by Dr. Spencer, showing that the milk dealers in New York City were operating at a loss of three tenths of a cent in August, 1933. Mr. Melish's comment is: "If the report is accurate, the sooner a Milkshed Authority is set up in New York City, the better. Private dealers cannot be expected to operate at a loss for an indefinite period."

The obvious implication is that government dealers *can* be expected to operate at a loss for an indefinite period; and therein too often lies the fallacy of those who advocate municipal ownership in place of private enterprise. Profits don't matter; losses will be paid by the taxpayer.

V

THE GENERAL economic principle of the present Administration, specifically stated in the program of the NRA, is not to govern industry but to make it possible for industry to govern itself. The government establishes a framework of regulations which will eliminate the evils of excess competition and still permit the benefits of intelligent competition. Several states now have milk-control boards with regulatory powers over the dairy industry. In New York the control board is now the Division of Milk Control in the Department of Agriculture and Markets. Its powers over the industry are drastic.

Aside from these regional and state agreements, the Federal program under the AAA contemplated very definite regulation of the industry, based upon the control of production. Mr. Melish discussed it in his article. The plan of reducing production has now been abandoned. On April 23, 1934, Chester C. Davis, Dairy Administrator, announced that the plan had been withdrawn "because we do not feel that it has sufficient support from the farmers." Throughout the country, particularly in the East, the farmers were opposed to a program which would fix the amount of milk which they could produce.

As against restriction of output, the industry offers another and not unreasonable solution — increase in consumption. The restriction program was to cost a quarter of a billion dollars. The National Dairy Council — a co-operative research organization in the industry — has announced that the government could do much more for the farmer if it used ten million dollars to increase milk consumption. The large milk distributors are, of course, devoting considerable money and effort in advertising and educational work to expand the milk market. The combined national advertising appropriations of National Dairy and Borden probably exceed ten million dollars a year. New York State has appropriated five hundred thousand dollars for the same purpose.

This is highly practical work which, if successful, would offer to the farmer a very much larger fluid-milk market — and it is fluid milk which brings the farmer his highest price. If every person consumed one half-glass more of milk daily, the demand would require over ten billion pounds more milk than last year's peak production. One full glass more — a half-pint — would increase milk consumption by twenty-three billion pounds, or about eleven and a half billion quarts a year.

This is no dairy farmer's corncob pipe dream. Such an increase is not only possible but highly desirable from the standpoint of national health. The average consumption of fluid milk in this country — in cooking and as a beverage — is less than a pint per person a day. Scientific and health authorities would double this figure.

With a milk consumption sufficient to meet health requirements and with state and federal authorities supervising the price structure, the milk industry — both producer and distributor — will be able to operate on a sound economic basis, without embarking on radical departures from the present administrative program; while at the same time the consumer himself will be adequately protected and effectively served.

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CO-OPERATION OR REVOLUTION

BY STEWART PATON

MANY AMERICANS still believe in miracles and magic. They count upon patent medicines to cure their physical infirmities. A primitive faith in magic words, taboos, and various kinds of charms and incantations temporarily frees them from worry, relieves their spirits, pulls them out of attacks of depression, restores confidence, while they dream of a new heaven and a new earth. At present these believers in faith cures are trying to decide which one of two words they will adopt as a slogan that will convert despair into hope and change a falling into a rising tide of progress. "Revolution" is one, and "co-operation" is the other talisman.

Revolution is a form of magic upon which man has always depended whenever he engaged in the impossible task of trying to effect miraculous and sudden changes in human nature. If we wish to make at least one more effort to be reasonable and sane, there is no reason to stop now to consider what would or would not be accomplished by the adoption of revolutionary methods.

Co-operation in constructive enterprises is a promising field of investigation for the millions of people whose nerves have been on edge and who have wasted both energy and substance in fussing, fuming, and fearing.

Success in making peace and progress depends upon the skill we acquire in carrying on constructive, co-operative enterprises. But, as we know from sad experience, we have a great deal to learn to secure effective co-operation. It is easier to revolt than it is to learn to co-operate. While a revolutionary attitude of mind stimulates the desire to impose our views, it does not help us to learn a new art. "Revolutionaries," as Gerald Heard sagaciously remarks, "are never interested in understanding, but in imposing."

We have treated co-operation as a fad but not as an art to be learned and practiced. Co-operation is not a lost art. It is the newest and latest of all arts. During his long history, man has only tried, in an amateurish, blundering, ineffectual manner, to acquire skill in making united, concerted body-mind efforts to establish peace and sanity.

To-day public interest is directed more and more toward the problems of how to apply the lessons we have learned from the experiences of the past few years in improving co-operative methods of living and of making a living. We are beginning to appreciate, as we have never done before in time of peace, the need for effective co-operative activity. One of the most encouraging signs of the times is the awakening desire to pool human interests. Not until we have been more successful in this undertaking shall we be prepared to take a long, strong pull together to ensure effective action. We have just begun to sense the importance of assisting farmers, business men, bankers, economists, politicians, lawyers, physicians, and educators to participate in well-planned, united efforts. The experiences of the past two decades have given a tragic emphasis to the energy dissipated in needless discord, opposition, and conflict. We must learn to co-operate if we expect to retain a vestige of civilization. No man can live to and for himself. Our happiness and the future of democracy depend upon what can be accomplished in the selection of methods that will stimulate and encourage co-operative activity.

AN EMOTIONAL PROBLEM

WHAT, THEN, can we do that has not already been attempted, so that we shall be more successful in making united, well-directed efforts to improve existing conditions? There must be some way of reducing the chances of recurrence of periods of depression and of

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states of panic and of fear such as those from which we are slowly emerging. In the first place, we can accomplish a great deal by taking cognizance of the obvious fact that the problem of successful co-operation is distinctly an emotional problem. At present this fact is not generally recognized. We still minimize the human side of the situation and discuss the troubles of the farmers, bankers, and politicians as if their emotional difficulties were separate and distinct and had no common human denominator. Billions of dollars have been wasted by ignoring the fact that the same biological laws govern feelings, thoughts, and actions, while the same forms of mental disorder make the whole world kin.

Each person suffers from the delusion that he has his special set of problems to solve. Farmers, bankers, economists, politicians, as well as scientific investigators, often champion what they believe to be their special interests and privileges. They ignore the signs of energy dissipated in frustrated attempts to acquire additional skill in co-operation. The medical profession suffers as acutely as the bankers or politicians from the evil effects of narrow and excessive specialization. The same spirit of unwillingness and unpreparedness to take a broader view of health permeates all professions. In order to gain confidence and to prepare to co-operate we must have health. But unfortunately health is assumed to be merely a condition in which disease does not exist. Cut out or cast out disease, and then we assume that we shall possess health. But our conception of health, as Dr. J. B. Jacks, writing in the *London Spectator*, has pointed out, should not be pared down to this extent, simply to satisfy the demands of narrow specialists. Health cannot be defined in negative terms. It gives no idea of what health is to say that it is a condition in which disease does not exist. Good health is a condition in which a person has acquired the art of using his natural body-mind equipment with the minimum waste of energy in friction. If we read the results of the various health surveys that are being made throughout the country we can readily see that many of these investigations stop when the presence of disease is not detected. This practically limits health campaigns to the old task of casting out devils. The members of the medical profession had been so thoroughly deluded by this false, negative conception of health that they were as unprepared as the rest of the world to fight the plague of nervous and mental diseases, disorders of the entire body-mind organism, that drove us into war and into the period of post-war insanity, when fear, suspiciousness, and hatred reduced our capacity to make intelligent, concerted efforts.

In this country we are still engaged in fruitless discussions of whether the problem of how to use our body-mind activities for constructive purposes is or is not a promising field for the investigator. It would be easy to cite plenty of instances of the reluctance shown by those who are regarded as educators or who are prominent in the organization of the work that is supposed to prepare the way for peace and social betterment to take even the precautions that were adopted during the war in order to secure united, effective co-operative service. Soldiers who showed any signs of dis-ease, of inability to put their body-mind organizations into the tasks assigned them, were quickly relieved from active service. The emotional drive was directed so as to secure the maximum effect from hearts and heads that worked in unison. Civilized man's greatest and most impressive demonstrations of co-operative efficiency have been in making war but not in making peace. The cost, estimated in lives and money, of the failures to co-operate as effectively in making peace as we did in making war represents the greatest of all war debts.

The present armed state of the world is a startling demonstration of the intelligence exhibited by militarists in harnessing the driving power of the emotions to provide effective co-operation in preparing for war. It also shows up the stupidity and folly of peacefully disposed citizens in not profiting from the lessons of experience sufficiently to appreciate that we cannot operate a power plant without giving attention to the question of whether the supply of power will suffice to run the machinery.

The Psychic Depression

One of our most absurd and cherished delusions is that the period of economic depression was primarily responsible for the worries, fears, and tortures we are enduring.

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Inefficient, bungling body-mind service came first and was the cause of the depression. First there was the period of elation, the boom years, when we planned, built, and dreamed of skyscrapers. At this time, fear of facing reality was just as dominant a factor in directing our uncontrolled thoughts, feelings, and actions as it was during the subsequent period of depression. When the tower that we tried to build to heaven collapsed, then followed the confusion of tongues. We could not understand what had happened nor could we understand one another. Farmers, bankers, economists, politicians, and statesmen all spoke a different language. In our depressed, excited, apprehensive state of mind, it became more and more difficult to understand the meaning of the symbols and words we used. We had a depression aphasia. The desire to co-operate was at a very low ebb. Gradually the persistence of the mental disturbances forced us to take notice of the symptoms. We were worried and harrowed by a sense of guilt and by a grueling fear of fresh, impending disasters. Deprived of any reason for feeling confidence in our own abilities, we proceeded to blame and to curse the financial, economic, political, and social systems under which we lived, for our misfortunes and sufferings. The deeper and more acute our personal senses of guilt, the more convinced we were that we were victims of circumstances. Following the orgy of overproduction in industry we turned our attention to the wholesale manufacture of scarecrows, scapegoats, and scapegraces. We were in such a state of panic that a flood of impulses forced us to be suspicious of somebody or something. We tried to relieve the tension by suspecting, fearing, and hating.

While in this unbalanced state of mind, the only methods upon which we depended to pull ourselves out of the Slough of Despond were those that man had tried repeatedly for thousands of years — prohibiting, prosecuting, and persecuting. If we could not drive away evil spirits by constitutional amendments prohibiting intemperance and insanity, then we tried prosecutions, both legal and illegal, and as a last resort we even tried persecution. Fortunately the average American does not have as much faith in the advantages to be derived from persecution as the Nazis possess. When we came at last to the end of our tether it was painfully evident that we could not restore law or order, drive out bad spirits, and prevent people from committing insane or criminal acts simply by prohibiting or prosecuting potential or actual offenders. Something had to be done at once to restore confidence, to secure intelligent co-operation, or the whole economic, political, and social system would collapse. Evidently it was necessary to develop confidence in our unknown selves. Quickly we discovered that it is not easy to build up a sense of confidence in these unknown selves. Nevertheless we have tried hard to believe that we are improving. No doubt we are. The course of human events has been forward. For at least a million years man has slowly but steadily made progress. We have not however any more solid or enduring basis for our feeling of growing confidence than we had while we were in the period of elation that preceded the depression. Emotional currents over which we had very little control brought back the feeling of confidence of which on short notice we had been unceremoniously deprived.

The Waste of Energy

In public life we see plenty of examples of people who are so unprepared to estimate their own co-operative efficiency that they refuse to delegate full responsibility to their subordinates, while the public suffers from the consequences of inefficient service. Alfred Korzybski, the author of the interesting book, *Science and Sanity*, has pointed out the hopelessness of trying to secure efficient public service as long as we are disinclined to delegate full and complete responsibility to persons occupying public office. Many heads of departments do not know just how far to trust the body-mind efficiency of subordinates; instead of attending to their own duties, they are continually investigating or checking up on the work done, with the result that they turn out to be distressing examples of inefficiency and incompetency. As we gradually acquire confidence and skill to estimate as well as to direct our body-mind energy, we shall be less inclined to withhold full authority from those who have been selected to perform special tasks. In spite of an air of assumed confidence, there are many reminders of clashes, of collisions, of conflicts,

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and of the discord that defeats co-operative efforts. Inefficiency is one sign of reduced co-operative capacity and inefficiency is the great disorder of democratic forms of government.

When we review the events of the last four years there is no doubt that in a spasmodic, bungling, inefficient way we have tried hard to co-operate. We did not fail through lack of good intentions. But mysterious forces repeatedly defeated the carrying out of plans. A vast amount of energy that might have been used in useful work was wasted in attacks of nervousness, of depression, of apprehensiveness, of recrimination, and of fear. Like clumsy workmen, we then blamed our tools. Few attempts were made to locate the source of our troubles.

What actually happened to frustrate and defeat so many good intentions? Evidently we did not know how to control the motor power. Again and again we showed that we were only inexperienced amateurs in steering the complicated and wonderfully balanced human machine. In our confusion we constantly stepped on the gas at the same time that we applied the brakes. This mistake was repeated so frequently that we finally decided that it was folly to rely upon prohibitive restrictions to make us temperate, honest, peaceful, or sane. To-day the writing is on the wall. The meaning of the words is plain. We must find some way of ensuring intelligent co-operative action to promote peace and sanity or perish. We cannot live carelessly for long in a world full of high explosives.

Toward Acquiring Stability

It is folly to hesitate any longer to set to work to improve our skill in the art of co-operation. We are an extravagant, undisciplined people which recklessly wastes energy in ineffectual attempts to compensate for slouchy postures, childish forms of speech, sloppy mental processes, love of the sensational, and lack of skill in expressing artistic feelings and impulses. Energy that might easily be utilized to construct and to create is drained away in attacks of nervousness and in satisfying primitive and childish desires. The limited amount of knowledge we have about our body-mind selves frequently permits fear to become the dominant and domineering motive; hence we are totally unprepared emotionally either to arbitrate or to co-operate. Fear prolongs the silly conflicts between labor and capital, between those who worship the old or the new idols, while we remain on edge and in an emotional state when we are unable either to recognize or to settle any of our important problems.

We shall have nobody but ourselves to blame if we do not succeed in mastering the art of arbitrating rival claims and of co-operating sufficiently to avoid the violent and protracted emotional storms that block straight thinking and prompt action.

Every member of a board of arbitration to-day should be carefully examined to see whether he has a sound mind in a sound body. If physical defects exist, then the examiner should decide whether satisfactory rational, emotional, and mental compensations have been effected, so that the capacity to observe, to hear evidence, and to draw logical deductions has not been seriously impaired. On the emotional and mental side the chances of successful arbitration or co-operation are greatly diminished by a feeling of excessive elation or depression, by an egotistical attitude, by the propensity to worry, to be unduly apprehensive and to be a slave of fear. Every year thousands of Americans commit suicide by adopting the protracted method of allowing the state of their nerves, chronic anxiety, and a general state of perturbation to kill them. During their lives these unstable people do a great deal more than militarists to provoke the conflicts that end in attacks of personal insanity or in the national, international, or racial insanity that leads to war. If we are successful in preparing plans that will give us sounder minds in sounder bodies, we shall then possess the emotional balance and the intelligence required for effective co-operation and the assurance of progress.

To be published soon:
"The Myth of American Individualism"
by Ayers Brinser

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PETALS FALLING

A Short Story

BY THEODORA LIBBEY

"PETALS FALLING" has been awarded the first prize of $100 for 1933–34 in THE FORUM's annual short-story contest for college students using THE FORUM in their classroom work. Miss Libbey graduated this year from the University of New Hampshire.

The second prize of $50 is awarded to Edwin H. Ruding, of the University of Alabama, for his story, "Doors Open to Peter." The third prize of $25 goes to Margaret Chase, of Mount Holyoke College, for "Vans to Beat the Air."

You are a bishop. You know all about God, how good, how all-seeing, how kind and fatherly He is. Only one thing have you overlooked — He moves in mysterious ways. Ha, ha! A good joke on you, my Uncle, a good joke. Had you dwelt more on His mysteriousness, you might have saved yourself much personal wonder all these eleven years. Worry has aged you. Yes, you are very fat now, with many wrinkles. You deserve a good story. No, don't interrupt. You have nothing to say that I care to hear, I am sure.

Why are you so white? You're not afraid, are you? You're not afraid of what I'm going to tell you? No? Well, I don't believe you, but that's neither here nor there. You always were a sly old fellow. You thought you could dedicate yourself to Him and then cheat a little bit, what? But I told you, the error you made was in forgetting that He moves in mysterious ways. Pass me a cigarette, my holy Bishop.

You remember the year my father died? We were living here then, because my mother would not be parted from this old house. It was her childhood home, and she seemed happy nowhere else. But I wonder how my father liked it. He was always laughing and young, not one to cling much to heavy, solid stuff. I cannot think how these dark rooms, how this air of regal solemnity must have depressed him. But take that cherry tree out there, leaning over the garden gate. It's in blossom now, I see. My father loved that tree. He planted it the year I was born. It's a beauty, isn't it? I shall always remember him standing before it, watching its petals flutter to the earth. He used to say that petals falling made him feel sad, because soon the tree would stand utterly bare, like a stripped soul. How well my father could anticipate the years! *Like a stripped soul.* You see, my Uncle? And then he would laugh and say that he supposed he *ought* to feel sad once in a while. The blossoms he put in my hair were like — but that's neither here nor there.

You *do* remember the year my father died. You remember, too, that because his death seemed to have broken my mother's health you sent her and me to the shores of Deep Lake to rest and forget. That was kind of you. It was beautiful there. Our house stood in the shade of a mountain, a tall mountain risen like a wall out of our very back yard. Except for our lawns, the big forest pines crowded to the very rim of the lake, cupping the depths, making the dark waters even darker. All day long we breathed in a wind reeking of pine forests, we heard mountain whisperings and wave croonings, we saw majesty. You never were there, were you? You didn't know, and from my description you could never guess the awe that went winding through the innermost being. It was far too lovely and lonely a place for human residence. The innately strong its strength expanded with a new strength. The weak its strength fed an insane conception of mortal weakness. I didn't understand then but I remember distinctly and I understand now. I understand now why my mother brooded so much, why she took her walks alone and walked so far. I knew her no longer. At night the maid heard my prayers, heard me say, "And God bless the Bishop, my uncle," and so on. And in her sleep I heard my mother say

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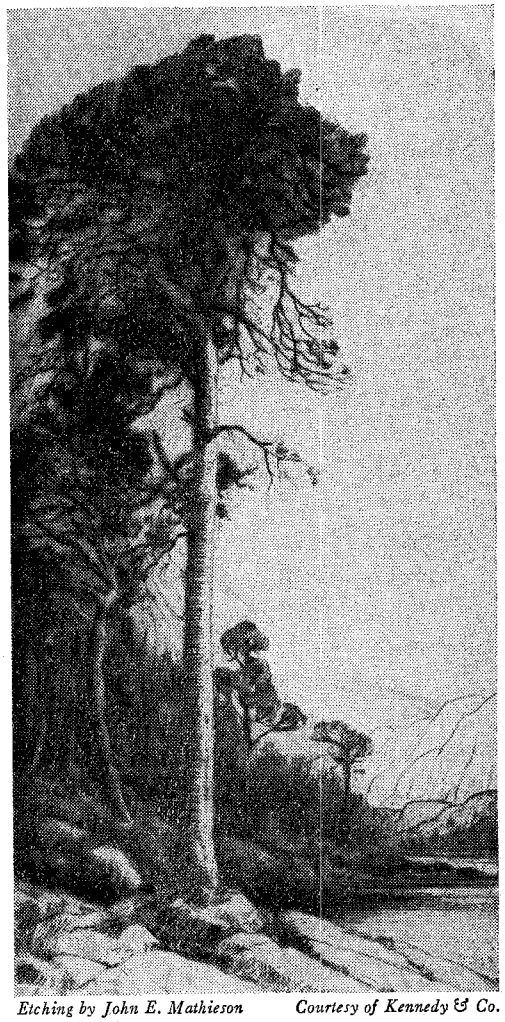
her prayers: "Oh, God, forgive me. Forgive me!"

Don't "Gretchen!" me. I remember well enough.

Yes, I was quite alone. I would have been morbidly alone but for my dog, Curly. You remember Curly, of course. You always hated dogs but you gave him to me to keep me out of here, away from your books and busy, out of your sight. That's why you gave me the pony, too. I was eleven years old then and I thought you were kind but I understand better now. You hated me. Oh, you needn't protest. That's neither here nor there.

I don't know what got into me up there. I felt wild and free and happy. I felt a glory welling up in me. I wanted to challenge the sky, the hills, the lake, and the whole earth. When my mother was far enough away, I used to climb up to a bald, rocky spot in the mountain-side and stand looking out to the world and screaming to it. I was brave and I wanted to be noticed. One night I said my prayers alone. The flame of the candle by my bed danced with the breeze and grew tall, tall to the ceiling, and I did not say "God bless the Bishop!" I said, "God, let my little dog, Curly, drown in Deep Lake to-morrow." I felt rather frightened after I said it, but the flame fell down, the curtains stopped waving to me. The next afternoon — that was three days before we were to return to you here — Mary (the maid) and I were playing by the water. Mary was throwing sticks out into the lake for Curly to swim after and fetch to shore. The three of us thought it was great sport. I had forgotten my prayer at the moment, but it shot into my brain like a burning arrow when I saw Curly out in the lake, cramped and fighting to swim home. It was a short struggle; he went down facing the opposite shore. Er — this might sound like a harsh yarn to any but you, my good Bishop. Of course, it might have been coincidence. I did not think so. I was frightened, terrified, horrified. I ran away into the forests and wept in an hysteria of guilt. At night I came home, still crying. They comforted me. They thought I wept out of love for Curly. I did love the dog, but they were right only in part. I wept, too, because suddenly an infinite vastness had opened up before me, and I knew the crushing wonder of beholding it measured.

I waited a day but I could bear my awful secret no longer. I confessed my act of murder to my mother. What a foolish child I was! I can see her so plainly, staring at me with that long, white face of hers, as if she feared me. Her arms fell away from my shoulders. A moment later she left me, and I could hear her in the next room ordering Mary to the packing. I wept again. I understood nothing, but I was vaguely conscious that my confession to my mother was the cause of our sudden departure. I was not sorry. I thought I was coming here to my birthplace, which seemed to me the only place of safety on earth. Here was my uncle, a bishop. Surely *he* could handle God all right. Well, you know as well as I that my mother was not returning to you. Wasn't it a bit strange that the dog you gave me out of hate and the haven you hastened us to out of fear should both have worked so well against you in depriving you of your dearest love, your dearest hope, your dearest interest in life? Why don't you laugh? You used to think that grief was ridiculous — when you had none. That half-hidden scorn with which you talked to my darling, love-starved father — really, Bishop, you should stop gripping your chair so. It is *most* unbecoming to a man of your



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heavenly calm. Surely you are not shocked to learn that your holiness preyed upon my mother's mind until she went holy herself and interpreted the daily coincidences in terms of the supernatural? Surely, having given yourself to Him, you are not loath to see my mother follow in your footsteps?

II

No. I DON'T want to stop. I'm not tired in the least. I'll have a cigarette, please. You'll want to hear the end of my story, Uncle. Why, *of course*, you do. Don't be so huffy about it. It won't take long. And you haven't seen your dear niece for eleven years, you know. I am very pretty, too, the image of my mother. Isn't that some consolation? After our departure from Deep Lake, we established permanent residence in New York. It should please you to know that my mother became exceedingly devout to her altars and that this certain peace which she seemed to derive from her religion was her greatest comfort. It may please you also to know that each year she received me a little more coldly and at last withdrew from me entirely. Luckily for me, my tutor had my welfare at heart. It was he who first handed me my mother's old violin, a clean, shiny thing wrapped in wine satin and smiling up at me like a little child. It was he who taught me the first chords. Those first chords! Bradley was my friend. After he taught me all he knew, he sent me to study under Morianio. Later, upon Morianio's advice, I journeyed to Hungary to attend the University of Budapest. For a while I was happy with that strange, restless happiness of Deep Lake. What would it mean to you if I told you that I fell in love with a beautiful artist, who was very kind to me but utterly incapable of returning my affection sincerely? Nothing. My father would have understood. Ah, yes. He would not have asked me once why I fled from Hungary. He would have looked at me . . . so . . . and suffered my sorrow. But — and so I had been alone in Paris three months when I received word that my mother lay on her deathbed and that it was her wish that I return immediately.

You know that she was a beautiful woman. As she lay there, I thought her lovelier than any other earthly — but that's neither here nor there. A priest and a doctor stood by her, waiting for the end. I sat on the bed. I did not offer to touch her, but she put her hand in mine. Hers seemed very warm and alive. She talked with her eyes closed. She told me many things: that she was not your sister and that you were not my uncle; that she was a nameless orphan adopted into your family; that she loved you, that you are my father and I am your daughter; that she married the man I still adore and call my father simply to save *your* name, to protect *your* holiness, to cover *your* sin. Nice of her, wasn't it? Poor woman. The tears ran down the sides of her face and made big spots on the pillows — Great Scott! Don't jump around so! Everybody has to die, Uncle.

Why don't you pull your curtains back and look at that white-headed tree out there. Here, I'll do it for you. Why, the blossoms are almost all fallen, blown away. They are lying all over the ground, like snow. How pretty! There must be a strong wind blowing, because when I entered there were many, many petals clinging and swaying on the branches. Such a beautiful, quick thing, the cherry tree.

Of course, I wouldn't *accuse* you of murdering my father. But he was so young. . . .

Here! I'm going. Keep cool, will you? I thought my story — well, perhaps you can get a sermon out of it. Hold on! Where's my purse? Never mind, I have it. *Au revoir*, my holy Bishop!

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OUR ROSTRUM

These columns are open to brief letters commenting upon any article or subject that has appeared in The Forum. Because of space limitations, the Editor must reserve the right to publish letters only in part.

The Death Lobby

To the Editor:

In my article, "The Death Lobby," printed in the August issue of The Forum, I call attention to the fact that the population of the United States is no longer reproducing itself. I venture also an expression of concern lest history, that has seen the rise and fall of so many peoples, may even now be unrolling the scroll upon which is written the untimely and shocking death, by its own hand, of the great nation of the West. Guy Irving Burch, privileged to read the article in manuscript, replies in the same issue.

Remember the point at issue, the present vitality of the population of the United States. Here, in effect, is Mr. Burch's answer:

The United States, he says, has a Catholic Postmaster General, and this official allows to go through the mails certain books that discuss the question of relative fertility at certain recurrent periods in the female cycle.

Accustomed as I am to the vagaries of the logic of propagandists for the unrestricted manufacture and sale of contraceptive devices, for once I am forced to confess my inability to follow this line of reasoning. Frankly, to me it smacks of nothing so much as the forced feeding to Mr. Burch's public of large doses of the familiar but ever-reliable red herring. There just is no answer to the twin facts that the population of the United States is not reproducing itself — this is true *here and now*, not as a prediction for the future — and that a nation whose population does not reproduce itself must inevitably perish. Mr. Burch recognizes the literally fatal cogency of these two facts, so, wisely, he does not attempt to dispute them. Instead, he braces himself solidly on both feet, draws a deep breath, grabs the poor, unoffending Roman Catholic Postmaster General around the middle, and hurls him into the center of the stage. Population decline has been once more unmasked as a Romish plot; the case is won!

It is unfortunate, if inevitable, that Mr. Burch should refuse to face the issue. It cannot be denied that he and the group for which he is frequent spokesman, through persistent and effective use of all possible means of propaganda, have exercised considerable influence upon the thought and practice of the present generation. To-day, thinking men of all creeds and of none, men who view the problem entirely apart from any question of ethics or morality, have come to deplore this influence. Let us strip the discussion of verbiage and dialectic. Here is precisely what is happening.

As far back as 1926, in all northern and western Europe and in the United States, the women of childbearing age were not reproducing themselves. In that year, says Dr. Robert R. Kuczynski of the Brookings Institution of Washington, D. C., "1,000 mothers in northern and western Europe gave birth to 930 future mothers only. *With the fertility of 1926 the population is bound to die out . . .*" ("Births," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. II, pp. 568–72). *And fertility has plunged rapidly downward ever since!* Said M. Fernand Boverat in concluding a report to the Sixth International Congress of the *Ligue pour la Vie et la Famille:* "The study of the movement of European populations in 1931 and 1932 shows us then how necessary it is, if we wish to snatch European civilization from the mortal danger which threatens it, to intensify the struggle against the diminution of fertility." This conclusion was based on an exhaustive analysis of the downward trend of populations throughout Europe.

In the United States, the situation is almost as acute. It may be a shock to realize that the Empire State of New York joined the ranks of decadent populations almost a decade ago and continues to decline. Throughout the country it was estimated that in 1931 but 220 children were being born to each 100 mothers, whereas it requires about 330 to keep the population merely stable. And this situation, too, has become steadily worse.

These figures could be elaborated indefinitely, did space permit. On the basis of the evidence presented, however, it must be obvious that the United States to-day is facing death, death by slow but sure decline. I call upon all true Americans, those who feel that the United States has a destiny in the comity of peoples, those who feel that she should again provide in the future, as she has provided in the past, unequaled opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, to fight back against the lethal propaganda that would hasten her demise. And I say again, as I said at the conclusion of the August article, "if that be 'Roman Catholic,' make the most of it!"

Edward Roberts Moore

New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

I have read with considerable interest the debate on birth control in which Father Moore once more burns a straw man and Mr. Burch again sets forth the true objective of the birth-control movement, namely, a *better* population which shall live more freely and abundantly.

The present legal status of contraception does not offer an effective obstacle to its use by the privileged but does make it exceedingly difficult for the underprivileged, the unemployed, the socially and economically inadequate to keep any reasonable proportion between their families and their resources. The present restrictive anti-contraception laws are, in effect, then, class legislation at its worst, undemocratic, inhumane, and biologically disastrous. . . .

Stuart Mudd

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editor:

. . . Much as I honor Father Moore's earnestness, it seems to me that he falls into numerous fallacies. . . .

1. He assumes that a large population is in itself desirable. One of the most fundamental principles of economic geography is that for every type of natural environment and every stage of human progress there is an optimum . . . population. . . .

2. A second fallacy is that the old economic system based on the needs of a rapidly expanding population has something sacred about it. . . .

3. America is said to face grave danger of depopulation. . . . Whenever there is a deficiency of population . . . the birth rate automatically rises. . . .

4. Father Moore seems to imply that a low birth rate means poverty . . . France, where the birth rate has long been low, enjoys a far greater dissemination of general comfort than do Spain, Italy, Russia, and many other countries with high birth rates.

5. Another fallacy is that restrictive laws really check the dissemination of contraceptive information. . . . They only tend to cause the information to be bootlegged and to be of inferior quality. . . .

6. According to Father Moore . . . birth control necessarily . . . prevents the growth of population . . . this is not true in Holland, Stockholm, or even France. . . . Moreover, this reversal is strongest among the most intelligent and successful people. . . .

7. The last fallacy is the tacit assumption that quantity is more important than quality. . . .

Ellsworth Huntington

New Haven, Conn.

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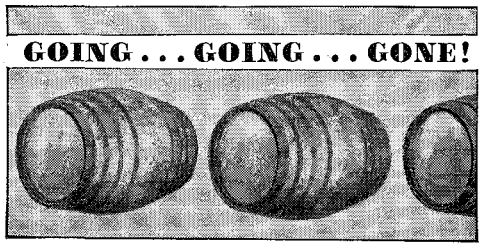

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OUR ROSTRUM

To the Editor:

The Burch-Moore debate on birth control, in the August issue of THE FORUM, was very enlightening. I greatly admire your policy of putting a pen in the hands of representatives on each side of a question, opening your pages to them, and telling them to go to it. In addition to the fairness of such a procedure, there is another merit. Frequently one disputant or the other, given all the literary rope he wants, manages to hang himself, thus saving the public the trouble of doing it for him!

Such seems to be the case in the debate mentioned. The opponents of birth control must sense their eventual defeat, for they are getting more and more panicky, grasping at whatever arguments are in sight without waiting to see whether these same arguments may be neatly turned against them, as they often are. Too many of Father Moore's arguments are of the Father Coughlin type — they appeal to emotion, not thought. . . . Human welfare, as Mr. Burch points out, lies in *standard of living*, not in numbers. If an unrestricted birth rate and a rapidly increasing population are guarantees of prosperity, why do the Japanese have a standard of living that is only a fraction of ours? . . . Because the standard of living is not determined by numbers alone but by . . . numbers, natural resources, production, and distribution. . . .

RAY ERWIN BABER

New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

In discussing birth control, the amazing charge was made in your columns that the Catholic Church was sending birth-control information through the mails. How absurd! . . . She wants babies!

The proof of the pudding is the eating of it. Let any woman try to follow the instructions printed in that alleged birth-control literature, and if she does not become *enceinte* in a jiffy then don't put the "blame" on the birth-control information. . . .

G. H. HALLEN

Cincinnati, O.

APOLOGY

The Editor regrets that, owing to a clerical error, the names of two colleges were omitted from the list of those whose students submitted verse in THE FORUM'S *national poetry contest. He offers his sincere apologies to Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, and Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont.*

THE CHURCH AND COMMUNISM

To the Editor:

Father Colony's article ["The Church Made Communism," August FORUM] is a puzzling mixture of truth and error. . . . To say that Marx was in essence a plagiarist of Jesus' morality is to do Marx a grave injustice. . . . Marxism demands the abolition of special privilege and exploitation that men may be more completely their animal selves. Christ demands the same thing, but that men may be free to develop their love of God. . . .

But Father Colony is quite right in saying that Christianity, by refusing properly to denounce a social system built on exploitation of humanity for the sake of rents, interest, and profits, has played directly into the hands of the Marxists. And he is equally right in his insistence that all Christian forces ought unitedly to face the issues involved. . . . There are two alternatives to the present anarchic and selfish social system that rules the world: Christianity and communism. It is fairly clear that the present order is doomed. But to say that the two candidates to take its place are one and the same thing is to blink facts. Father Colony is right in thinking that Christianity is the better of the two ways before us; but he is wrong in intimating that communism is only a defective Christianity.

BERNARD IDDINGS BELL

Providence, R. I.

To the Editor:

Congratulations on the article, "The Church Made Communism," by David Carl Colony. It is one of the most straightforward treaties on this subject that I have had the pleasure of reading in some time. . . .

JAMES F. GILDAY

Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

To the Editor:

. . . Mr. Colony contends that "the Church made communism." This does more credit to his powers of exaggeration than to his powers of analysis. . . . The Church . . . was not the author of the conditions out of which communism grew. She is the accessory after the fact rather than the arch-criminal. She must be censured for stupidity rather than malice, for blindness rather than wilful cruelty, for inertia rather than iniquity. . . .

That the Church can destroy communism . . . I agree. . . . The Church will be futile, however, until she unequivocally arrays herself against those forms of brutality and injustice inherent in our modern economic system. . . .

W. LEIGH RIBBLE

Stanardsville, Va.

To the Editor:

. . . David Carl Colony . . . hates communism. He loves Christ's teachings. He proves that communism is Christ's teachings, disguised. Since he knows that, why does he hate communism? If he recognizes Christ's teachings in com-

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OUR ROSTRUM

munism, why does he not embrace it as Christ's teaching? No, he does not love Christ in a blue shirt and overalls; he loves Him in a purple-and-gold cassock. . . .

JOHN YARMEL

Edwardsville, Pa.

ECONOMIC UNBALANCE

Comment on the first of Lewis A. Riley's two articles, "Masters of Make," in the July issue:

Senator Bronson Cutting, New Mexico: I was intensely interested. . . . It seems to me to state as cogently as possible the ills from which our age has been suffering. The remedy — a strengthening of the worker-consumer scale of the balance — is entirely clear. . . .

Archibald MacLeish, last year's Pulitzer Prize poet and author of "Preface to an American Manifesto," in the April FORUM: As a diagnosis of the malady it seems to me unarguably sound. . . . It is in the technical organization of consumers' control that the difficulty lies. . . .

PSYCHIC WOMEN

To the Editor:

I was more than intrigued by Claude Bragdon's "Delphic Woman" in your present August issue. It is the first balanced consideration of this subject that I have seen in a magazine.

I feel, however, that Mr. Bragdon has merely whetted the surface of what I believe to be a lusty appetite. I, personally, would very much like to see further discussion by him in the future.

JEROME VAN WISEMAN

New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

On reading through the August number of THE FORUM, I was much interested and intrigued by Claude Bragdon's article, "Delphic Woman."

It seems to touch a new note, a most potent one, I think, in this day and age of revolutionary changes and crumbling conventions.

Let us have more such articles, for they are surely timely, stimulating, and encouraging.

JEANNE WHITE

Brooklyn, N. Y.

To the Editor:

THE FORUM has been drawn to my attention through Claude Bragdon's article, "Delphic Woman." I find I'm not the only person, male or female, interested in the new field woman must take consciously in the coming years. Thank you for publishing this; I trust there will be other articles in THE FORUM along the same lines. . . .

HELEN R. MACKAY

Tenafly, N. J.

SUMMER SPENDS SEPTEMBER

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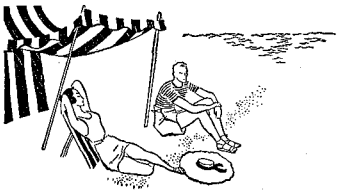

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TOASTS

JAMES WHITTAKER has been a professional pianist and a music critic for the *Chicago Herald and Examiner* and for "Musical America." He has written film scenarios and collaborated in two novels and is now with a New York newspaper.

EDWARD L. ISRAEL was, until a year ago, Chairman of the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Since 1923 he has been rabbi of the Har Sinai Congregation, in Baltimore, and was formerly a contributing editor of "The World Tomorrow."

GEORGE MARVIN has had a varied journalistic career in the Far East, in Europe, and in Mexico and was at one time in the service of the Chinese Imperial Government. At present he is an editorial and feature writer with the *Omaha World-Herald*.

BERNARD R. FLESHER is a native of Denver and a graduate of the University of Colorado.

MARY M. COLUM and her literary criticism should no longer require an introduction to FORUM readers.

LIONEL LEVICK is a New Yorker. Recently he set out on a trip to the Pacific Coast, leaving behind him only the enigmatic statement that he intended to study the popular state of mind.

ALBERT B. SHIELD is a native of New York City, where, he claims proudly, he was expelled from high school for flunking all subjects and playing hooky. He is 23 years old and will enter the University of Chicago Law School this fall.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT, who, in spite of his name, is an Englishman, is living in Vienna and working on a novel to be called *Europa*.

NORMAN THOMAS, long the principal figure of the Socialist Party in America, is a familiar author on economic and political subjects.

LUCILE GREBENC'S knowledge of biology began in the laboratory in her university days and has since been augmented by varied research work in hospitals and clinics and for private physicians.

RUSSELL HOLT PETERS, who has appeared in THE FORUM twice previously this year, is News Editor of the *Omaha Evening Bee-News*.

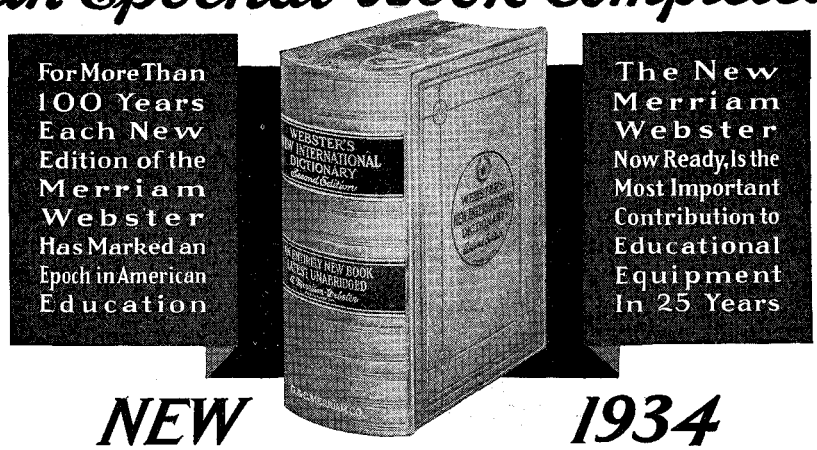
ARTHUR C. HOLDEN, one of the leading architects of the country, is actively identified, as author, committeeman, and welfare executive, with dozens of movements to solve our housing problems.

CLAUDE BRAGDON'S versatility is attested by his career as architect, theatrical designer, publisher, lecturer, and author of some fifteen books.

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL lives in Denver, where he is in the advertising business.

JOHN GALLISHAW not only writes himself but coaches other writers and is the author of three books for aspirants.

An Epochal Book Completed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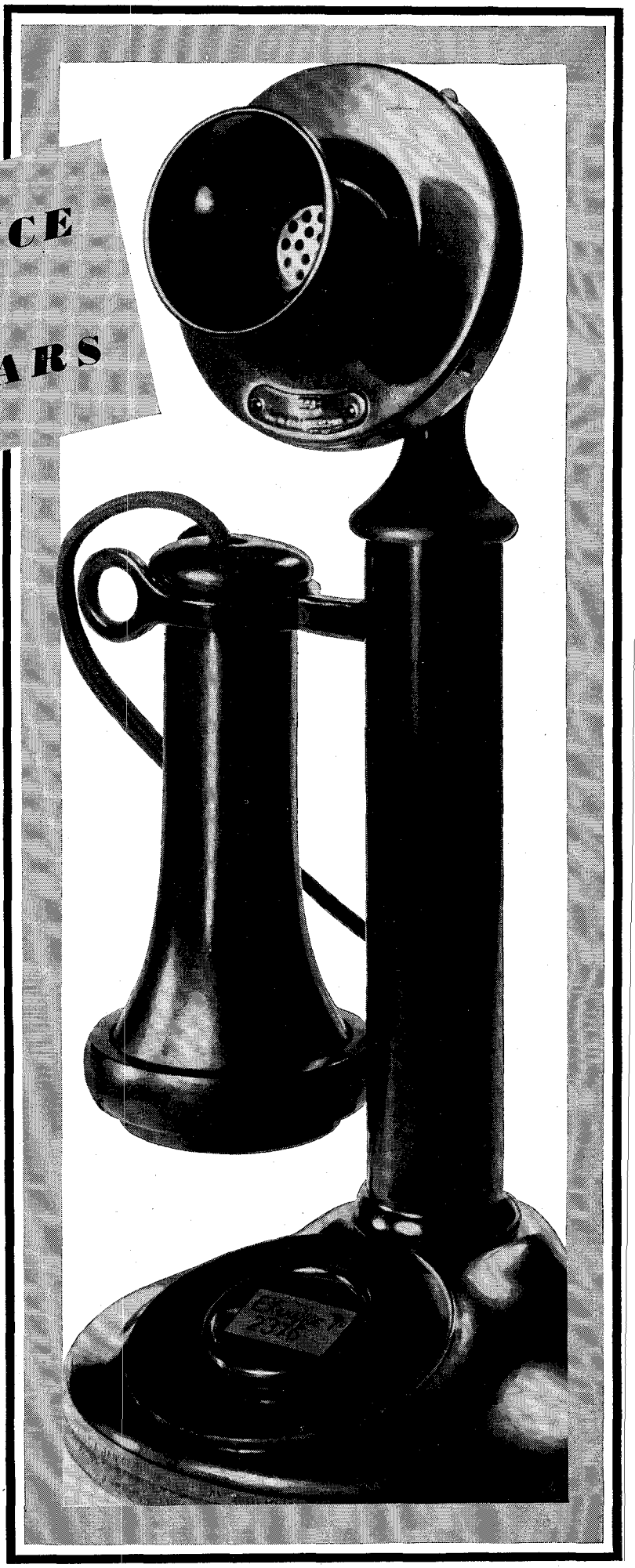

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